

THE CONFLICT OF GOALS

IN CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

by

Frank R. Newbern

A dissertation

submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Ministry

The School of Theology at Claremont

June, 1977

This professional project, completed by

FRANK R. NEWBERN,

*has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty
of the School of Theology at Claremont in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of*

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Faculty Committee


Jane D. Hauglass

April 20, 1977
Date

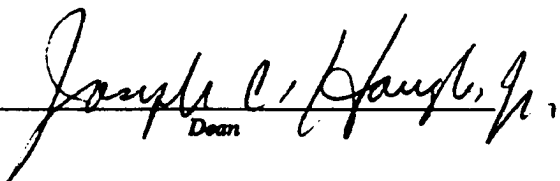

Dean

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	1
II. WHY PEOPLE GO TO CHURCH.....	5
WHY PEOPLE JOIN ORGANIZATIONS.....	5
WHY PEOPLE JOIN CHURCHES.....	7
Desire to Worship.....	9
Duty and Habit.....	9
Fellowship.....	10
Christian Education.....	11
Psychological Reasons.....	12
Socio-Economic Reasons.....	14
WHY PEOPLE DO NOT JOIN CHURCHES.....	15
Do Not Need it.....	15
Bad Experiences.....	15
Feelings of Unworthiness.....	16
Not Church Oriented.....	16
Too Busy.....	16
Family Division.....	16
WHY PEOPLE QUIT CHURCHES.....	17
WHY PEOPLE BECOME INACTIVE IN CHURCHES.....	18
III. WHY PEOPLE "OUGHT" TO GO TO CHURCH.....	20
A FUNCTIONAL CONCEPTION OF THE CHURCH.....	21
The Church is of God.....	23
The Church was Chosen for a Purpose.....	24
The Church is a Community of Persons.....	26
TRADITIONAL MARKS OF THE CHURCH.....	27
The Church is One.....	29
The Church is Holy.....	29
The Church is Catholic.....	30
The Church is Apostolic.....	30
The Declaration of the Word of God.....	32
The Administration of the Sacraments.....	33

SOME FUNCTIONAL MARKS OF THE CHURCH.....	34
Worship.....	36
Fellowship.....	39
Nurture (Christian Education).....	43
Outreach.....	46
IV. SOME PROBLEM AREAS.....	50
CAN THERE BE ONE GOAL?.....	50
SURVIVAL OF THE INSTITUTION.....	51
MOTIVATION AND MANIPULATION.....	55
VOLUNTARINESS.....	57
HUMAN DIFFERENCES OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS.....	58
ATTITUDES TOWARD CONFLICT.....	60
V. DEALING WITH THE CONFLICT.....	63
GOAL SETTING.....	63
Goal Clarification.....	63
Goal Ownership.....	66
Some Practical Suggestions.....	68
MOTIVATION.....	75
Physiological Needs.....	82
Safety Needs.....	83
Belongingness and Love Needs.....	84
Esteem Needs.....	85
Self-Actualization.....	86
EVALUATION.....	87
VI. SUMMATION.....	94
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	98

"ABSTRACT"

THE CONFLICT OF GOALS IN CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

By

Frank R. Newbern

The problem that this paper deals with is the tremendous disparity between reasons why people involve themselves with a church and why they "should" involve themselves. The motivation to write this paper came from a visit by the author, a minister of the United Church of Christ, to a member of his church who had been absent from the church fellowship for an extended period of time. Prior to this, he, his wife and son were among the most regular and faithful members. After several additional visits it was revealed that their only child, a senior in high school, had met a young lady who attended the youth fellowship of another church. In the youth's very natural desire to be near her as much as possible, he, too, was attending this other youth fellowship and his parents were simply not attending at all. The author's conclusion from this was to assume that the prime motivation in the parents involvement in church prior to this was to provide a religious and social setting to meet the needs of their son. With the compelling attraction of a young lady drawing their son to a different church situation, the parents apparently concluded that their job was done; and there was no longer any compelling motivation leading them to continued involvement in their church.

The problem that this situation presents is dealt with as an

intro-group conflict situation. In analyzing why people actually join a church information is gleaned from a variety of surveys, including some conducted by the author. In projecting why people should join the church attention is focussed upon biblical sources, church creeds and statements of faith, and the marks of the church, especially as debated during the time of the Protestant Reformation. Four "functional" marks, or purposes, of the church are developed and proposed as reasons why people should involve themselves with the church. They include worship, fellowship, nurture, and outreach.

It is concluded that most people join a church for what may seem to be selfish reasons, i.e., primarily to meet basic needs. People appear to be much more interested in being served than in serving others. This conflict of purpose is a multifaceted one. It is a conflict between conscious and subconscious motivation. It is a conflict between degrees of commitment or loyalty. One hesitates to conclude that people join for unworthy reasons. By themselves they are not unworthy. However, they are wrong, or inadequate, when compared with what should be prime motivation for going to church. People approach the church, and any other organization, with a variety of needs that cry out to be met. The church's responsibility is to enable people to meet their basic needs (attention is given to Abraham Maslow's categories of needs) and to move up the ladder to higher fulfilment. Some of the processes proposed to enable individuals to move up this ladder and close the area of conflict include

clarification of goals, public goalsetting and goal ownership,
motivation, and evaluation.

Chapter 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Recently I visited a member who has been absent from our church fellowship for more than a year. Prior to that time he and his wife and son were among our most regular and faithful members. For a few months prior to their total lapse in church involvement, their participation became somewhat spasmodic. During that time I made several visits with them to be sure that there had not been any incidents that may have resulted in hurt feelings. Eventually, after conversations with a variety of people who knew them well, I learned that their only child, now a senior in high school, had met a young lady who attended the fellowship of another church. In his very natural quest to be near her as much as possible, he, too, was attending this other youth fellowship and his parents were simply not attending at all. My conclusion from this was to assume that the prime motivation in coming to church all these years was to provide a religious and social setting to meet the needs of their son. With the entrance of a sweet young thing into the scene compelling the son to attend elsewhere, the parents apparently concluded that their job was done; and there was no longer any compelling motivation leading them to continued involvement in our church.

This illustration presents several problems. The obvious problem is, "What should we now do about this family that is lapsing in its involvement in our church?" From an administrative point of

view, do we place them on an inactive membership list and wait and see what they do? Do we drop them from the membership rolls since they are no longer fulfilling the requisites for membership? Do we continue sending people to visit them to persuade them to re-involve themselves? These are questions that need to be dealt with, but the problem to which I wish to address this paper is whether or not their original motivation for church involvement was sufficiently worthy. If not, why not? I would like to deal with the problem as a conflict situation, i.e., conflicting reasons for being involved with a church congregation. The conflict is a multifaceted one. It is a conflict between individual motivation and group objectives. It is a conflict between conscious and subconscious motivation. It is a conflict between degrees of commitment, or loyalty.

Most conflict situations can be said to fall into one or more of the following categories:

1. Intrapersonal conflict, i.e., within the individual, conflict may emerge between the purposive self and its inner and outer environment.
2. Interpersonal conflict, i.e., between and among individuals.
3. Intragroup conflict, i.e., within a group and among its members.
4. Intergroup conflict, i.e., between and among groups.
5. Individual-organization conflict, i.e., between person and organizations.
6. Inter-organization conflict, i.e., Martin Luther King leading

the S.C.L. against the State of Alabama.

The category that would be applicable to the conflict apparent in this case would be intra-group conflict. The science of conflict management would further describe intra-group conflict as a conflict in a group centered around:

1. Unclear goals and norms.
2. Distrustful relationships.
3. Power distribution.
4. Reward distribution.¹
5. Poor communication.

The church goal of this couple seemed to have been the religious socialization of their son. This conflicts with the stated goal of their church. The by-laws of the church in which they hold membership states:

The object of this church shall be to bind together followers of Jesus Christ for the purpose of sharing in the worship of God and in making his will dominant in the lives of men, individually and collectively, especially as that will is set forth in the life, teachings, death, resurrection and living presence of Jesus Christ.²

Some confusion can result from the indiscriminate use of terms which frequently are used synonymously. Terms such as: goals, purposes, overall objectives, targets, objectives, mission, etc.

¹G. Douglas Lewis, based on lecture given at First Presbyterian Church, Pasadena, CA., July 1976.

²First Congregational Church, Constitution and By-Laws, (Buena Park, CA., 1935).

My usage of some of these terms can be covered by a paragraph from Koontz and O'Donnell's standard work, Principles of Management.

The ends for which people strive are variously referred to as "purposes," "missions," "objectives," "goals," or "targets." "Purposes" is often used to denote the reasons for which an enterprise exists.... "Mission" is a term most often used in military operations and occasionally in churches or governments. It connotes a major program objective. "Objective" is a term commonly used to indicate the end point of a management program, whether stated in general or specific terms, while the implication of a "target" or "goal" is almost invariably one of specific quantitative aims. However, because clear distinctions are not often made in practise, these terms are generally used interchangeably.³

In this paper the terms: goals, purposes, "overall" objective, and ends will be used interchangeably to mean one thing. Mission, target, and objective will be used to mean something different. The first group of words will describe the nature and scope of the work to be performed. They establish the reason for the organization's existence. The second group of words are things which are more clearly measurable and accomplishable. The first group of terms deal with the ultimate and the second group deals with the measurable things which are necessary to perform to reach the ultimate.

³ Harold Koontz and Cyril O'Donnell, Principles of Management (New York: Mc-Graw-Hill, 1972), p.137.

Chapter 2

WHY PEOPLE GO TO CHURCH

Why People Join Organizations.

In the quest to satisfy needs and wants, people have found that many of them are best satisfied through group affiliation and action. If the members of various "fellowship," or "service," organizations are asked why they joined they would give a variety of different answers. Some might have joined because of a value placed on service, i.e., they want to help other people and they feel that the group provides this opportunity. Another person may have joined a group because they felt they could make some good business contacts. Some may have joined almost from tradition, i.e., their mothers or fathers were active members and it was just expected, even assumed, that they also would become members. Others joined because all their friends belong and being a member of the group is a way to be with their friends. A few may join because they are lonely people and they think they might make some more intimate contacts and perhaps make some friends. Others join what they think is a "different" group where they can escape from some of the restrictions and frustrations of everyday life and other group life. Many join because of the specific activity of the group, i.e., whatever holds high priority as an activity for them. Or they may even join because their boss or their boss's wife suggested that belonging to this group is "a good thing to do" if they want to "get ahead."

Motivational research in marketing has uncovered eight basic hidden needs which are usually appealed to in advertising. These needs, I believe, are genuine spiritual needs which should, and can, be met through worship and other forms of Christian service. They include:

1. Emotional security.
2. Reassurance of worth.
3. Ego-gratification.
4. Creative outlets.
5. Love objects.
6. A sense of power.
7. Roots.
8. Immortality.¹

The point of the preceding is that there is marked similarity between the reasons why people join any organization and why they join the church. A second point is the tremendous diversity of interests and motivations for belonging. Even if there were unanimity in determining the prime objectives in belonging there would be tremendous variation in the interpretation of these objectives. In a church this is evidenced by the constant debate that goes on within the church, the divisions that reflect different views, the difficulty of broad cooperation between groups, all pointing to the diversity of intent and understanding why certain groups have difficulties in agreeing upon goals and objectives and the methods they will use to achieve them. It is impossible to know all there is to know about group members. However, if one has some understanding of them as

¹Vance Packard, The Hidden Persuaders (New York: Pocket Books, 1957), p. 61-70.

individuals, what their basic drives and motivations are, and what needs they are trying to fulfill, one is in a better position to treat them as individuals, find areas of common agreement, find challenges that will motivate them, and better understand why they act as they do.

Why People Join Churches

There are possibly as many reasons why people go to church as there are church members. Before I list a personal summation of some of these reasons I would, briefly, like to list the results of two local church surveys with which I was involved. In an evaluation questionnaire by the United Church of Christ in the northern area of Oregon, a congregation was asked to check the most important reason why they came to Sunday worship. The following was the result:

For spiritual renewal	(17%)
For personal meditation or communion with God	(13%)
To hear the sermon	(12%)
Out of habit	(10%)
To be challenged and motivated to greater Christian service	(10%)
To bring children to Church School	(8%)
To meet people (fellowship)	(8%)
For the Communion service	(7%)
For services on special days (i.e., Easter, etc.)	(7%)
To enjoy the music	(6%)
For moral and ethical teaching	(6%)

Last year in my current situation at the First Congregational Church of Buena Park, a member of my church, Mr. George Morrissey, who is a management consultant, submitted a questionnaire entitled "What is the Job of This Church?" Included in the instructions were these

words: "What values or reasons for existence are most important to YOU personally as you consider the place this church plays, or should play, in YOUR life...Check what you honestly believe, not what you think you "ought" to check." The following is the result with the tabulation.

- 88- A place for organized worship of God.
- 88- A place for religious education - particularly for our children.
- 84- An opportunity for personal mental and spiritual stimulation.
- 56- A source of spiritual comfort for those who are ill, bereaved, shut-in, or troubled in other ways.
- 32- An opportunity for rendering Christian service to others.
- 31- A place for serving the youth of our community.
- 29- A source for the establishment of moral and ethical values.
- 25- A social center for developing wholesome friendships.
- 21- A source of evangelism for winning others to Christ.
- 17- A place for baptisms, weddings and funerals.
- 17- An outlet for personal expression (teaching, choir, etc.)
- 12- A base for the extension of an ever-expanding Christian World Mission.
- 11- A place to be confronted with and absolved from our sins.
- 8- A source of professional counseling on personal problems.
- 7- A place where I can spend one hour a week in peace without feeling guilty about not doing more.
- 6- Something worthwhile where I can contribute my money or other possessions.
- 3- A forum for discussing and dealing with critical social issues.
- 2- A community service organization.

In trying to summarize some of the reasons why people involve themselves with a church membership one is involved in a very difficult task. Questionnaires are so often controlled by the background of the individual or individuals who compose the questionnaires. The answers are also affected by the make-up of the various congregation. An additional difficulty involves the factor that a great deal of the motivation is at the subconscious level. Nevertheless, I would like to try to summarize the basic reasons for

church involvement under six headings.

1. Desire to Worship. I believe that a basic need in people is the expression of awe, reverence, and wonder. We need to find meaning for life. That meaning for the worshipper is found in a relationship to God who reveals the ultimate to man. Few people want to run the risk of despair in order to find that meaning by themselves and are reassured by their minister's (and fellow worshipper's) repeated affirmation that there is, after all, purpose in our existence. The church is often the only organization in the community which provides a perspective on life and an understanding of life's meaning. It promises divine help as well as human.

2. Duty and Habit. Many people attend church simply because they have always attended church. Most denominations report that the vast majority of their converts and church attenders are people who as children were habitually brought by their parents. We are creatures of habit. Often in approaching people whose attendance was lapsing the reply has been, "Oh, I just got out of the habit." Oftentimes people discipline themselves to attending church every Sunday, even when they truly do not want to attend, because of value of good habits and because of the difficulty of developing good habits. Often it can become a duty, i.e., something they feel that they "ought" to do.

In a national sampling of the United Church of Christ, four out of ten members declared the denominational label was a "very

important" reason for joining a church membership. This response is typical of the results from other studies.² Depending in part on the denomination and also in part on the format of the questionnaire, between one third and one half of most church members indicate that denominational loyalty was the critical factor in why they belong to their particular church. This tells us that they are more comfortable in a church where it has been their habit to attend. Quite recently I expressed surprise at the renewed regular attendance of a family that we were on the verge of dropping from our membership rolls. The wife responded by saying, "Oh, we are a family of habits. If we get into the habit of not attending, we do so with regularity. But once we get back into the habit of attending we do that with regularity too."

3. Fellowship (Sense of Community, Loneliness, Friendship).

In one local church survey the largest number of the respondents reported that they (and, in their opinion, others with whom they had contact) had sought out the congregation either because they were looking for friendships or because they wanted their children to have religious training. The need for fellowship is also brought out by William H. Whyte.³

²Lyle E. Schaller, Parish Planning (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971), p.212-213.

³William H. Whyte, Jr. The Organization Man (New York: Doubleday, 1957), p.421 f.

Gibson Winter suggests⁴ that this need is met because the congregation engages the member in a feeling of community. The congregation can be of particular value in this regard when it represents the residential area and enables the member to make contact with his neighbors and to feel that he is living in a community rather than merely a geographic sector. In a highly transient culture the church can truly help meet needs for friendship and social interaction.

In a sampling of the United Church of Christ a major consideration in attracting an individual to a local church was a contact with a person (parent, spouse, boy friend, girl friend, pastor, neighbor, or church visitor) who invited the individual. In fact most studies report 35 to 60 percent of the respondents identify a personal contact as the primary reason for belonging to the congregation of which they are now members.⁵ Loneliness drives a lot of people into the church. This is especially the case for those who have recently moved into the community and are anxious to reduce the strangeness.

4. Christian Education. In a study of the Presbyterian

⁴Gibson Winter, The Suburban Captivity of The Churches (New York: Doubleday, 1961), p.94-98.

⁵Schaller, p. 213.

Church" ..59% of the new members said an important factor in their decision to join was a sense that children need a Christian education."⁶ A pattern that I have seen repeat itself time and again is that of young people dropping out of church life in their late teens and then returning as soon as they get married, have children, and those children become of educable age. This is an especially strong motivation for families with school age children. Recently, however, this becoming a stronger motivating factor for adults as adult education gains priority in many churches.

5. Psychological Reasons. Many people go to church because of a variety of psychological reasons. They are deeply concerned, haunted by a sense of guilt and tremendous urgency. Some attend to placate an angry God. Gibson Winter suggests that activity in the congregation may serve the Protestant as penitential activity for the expiation of guilt. The willingness of members to be involved in drudge-type work for the congregation may be a rather economical way to rid themselves of a sense of sinfulness.⁷

Why do Christians continue to attend a church where almost every service is slanted toward the evangelistic need of the one or two non-Christians present? The evangelistic service builds up guilt,

⁶Donald G. Lester, "What Makes the 'Outsider' Turn to the Church?" Presbyterian Life, XV, (June 15 1962), 16.

⁷Winter, pp. 94-98.

holds out hope, and promises forgiveness through the public invitation. Perhaps the evangelistic churchmen have created a liturgy which is a re-enactment of their own conversion experience. The people who attend are assured that they are saved and are now immortal.

The psychological reasons for joining a church are remarkably similar to the eight basic hidden needs uncovered by motivational research and mentioned previously (i.e., emotional security, reassurance of worth, creative outlets, love objects, a sense of power, roots and immortality).

An appeal to the fact that we are needed is sometimes very effective in advertisement in the commercial world, i.e., the Volkswagon. How many children have, to the frustration and dismay of their parents come home with a little kitten that "needs" to have a home?

An increasing number of "church-shoppers" state very categorically that their "need to be needed" is a major factor in their choice of a church. They pick the congregation which persuades them that their time, energy, prayers, talents, and presence are needed in that church.⁸

Schaller points out that this has been an extremely effective technique, or appeal, to many people. As an appeal, however, he casts some doubts concerning the ethics of it as a technique.⁹

⁸Lester, p. 17.

⁹Lyle E. Schaller and Charles A. Tidwell, Creative Church Administration (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), p.73.

Personally, I question it because most of the surveys that I have studied show that people are, seemingly, more interested in what the Church can do for them than the reverse. Its main value, I believe, is in maintaining the member after having joined. One's position in the membership is solidified when a person feels that one's efforts truly make a difference, that one counts, and is important.

6. Socio-Economic Reasons. Some people join the church for exactly the same reasons that they would join any of the local service organizations, i.e., the Masonic Lodge, Rotarians, Lions, etc. In addition to the fellowship it is good business. It is a good place to make contacts. It helps provide them with a business image of ethical responsibility. It provides social acceptance. It may appear to them the "American" thing to do to display a commitment to religion-in-general. In other words it seems to be a "good thing to do." They have not thought through just why it is nor are they truly aware of the theological implications of the church. They do not see it as a redemptive community. Nevertheless, since it is a part of our culture, they go to church because it appears beneficial for socio-economic reasons. I have been a member of the local Rotary organization. Recently, one of the members, a lawyer, who was running for a judgeship, informed me that he was a member of my congregation. Upon my return I checked our church membership rolls, since during the five years at my present pastorate, I had never seen him in attendance, and found no evidence to substantiate his claim. Later,

I discovered that he also claimed membership in the local Roman Catholic Church and also the Lutheran Church. I assumed that he felt it was expedient for his political ambitions to be a "member." I have listed the reason, socio-economic (political), last because I believe that it is a dominant reason only among very marginal members.

Why People Do Not Join Churches

In order to throw additional light on the motivation of people in relating to a congregation perhaps it would be of help to look at some of the reasons why they do not join, why they quit, and why they become inactive.

1. Do Not Need it. An obvious reason is that they feel that they do not need it and that their needs are met elsewhere. Looking at the reasons given as to why people join any voluntary organization, one is struck with the similarity of the reasons as to why people join the church. Recently I have been observing with additional interest the church attendance pattern of those in my congregation most involved with other voluntary organizations and I do not think that the church gets number one priority in the majority of the cases. Some are indifferent to the church because they feel that in this scientific age it is archaic and does not have the value that it once had.

2. Bad Experiences. Some people do not go to church because of previous unpleasant experiences with the church. Perhaps their

parents made them attend and they are now acting out their rebellion. Maybe they experienced a church "fight." Perhaps they feel there are "too many hypocrites" in the church.

3. Feelings of Unworthiness. This represents a small minority but I have talked to some who feel this way, especially older people with tremendous guilt feelings over a "wayward" life. The person, with a sense of guilt feels that they cannot pray, take part in worship, be respected.

4. Not Church Oriented. It is amazing how many people have simply never had the experience of participating in a church program and been taught the meaning of worship. With all of the churches throughout the country a vast number of people still do not have a vital church life and grow to maturity without even knowing what the church can mean.

5. Too Busy. The competition for time is fantastic. Many business people, students, and professional people are simply worn out on Sunday morning or they are over committed and simply do not find time for church.

6. Family Division. Family division over religion keeps many people from the church. Two people who are unable to come to some common agreement about their religious affiliation find it easier to drop out rather than fight over their differences. It is difficult to maintain church loyalties when a family is divided over

where the loyalty shall be expressed.

Why People Quit Churches.

In a recent study of membership trends in the United Presbyterian Church, "dropouts" were asked to give their reasons for leaving their former congregation. Although the replies had a great deal of variance the research committee concluded that seven reasons were predominate. In order of frequency they are:

1. Moved away.
2. Dissatisfaction with the church, e.g., conflict, lack of fellowship, no feeling of belonging.
3. Other family members left, or respondent got married.
4. Difficulty with the minister.
5. Lost interest or no specific reason.
6. Specific beliefs or idea-centered differences with the congregation or denomination.
7. Other things to do on Sunday.¹⁰

One of the underlying causes of the study was to determine the effect that the denomination's emphasis on social action had on membership loss. They discovered that the social action issue had very little effect on loss or gain in its membership.

However, one element of the discussion over social action was proven true in our study. We asked if involvement in social action had caused disunity or conflict in the various congregations. Congregation declining in membership have experienced more conflict in this area of concern than have growing congregations. We conclude that congregational conflict over social action is the crucial factor rather than social action itself. Constructive handling of congregational conflict

¹⁰ Membership Trends (General Assembly Mission Council, United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1976), p.44.

is more important than the amount of social involvement.¹¹

This study also pointed out that membership loss was more obvious with the youth and the younger adults and gave the following reason:

Apparently changes in values among young people have had some effect. One change has been found in nationwide polls of adults and also of college students- increased individualism in religious and moral attitudes...We found that persons who recently dropped their membership in Presbyterian Churches were younger than the average age of members. They much more often agreed that "individuals should arrive at their own religious beliefs quite independent of the church." Other research has found increasing individualism among many groups in the population since the 1950's. We believe this underlying value shift in American life has contributed to church membership loss.¹²

Why People Become Inactive in Churches.

The following information is from an article by Richard D. Vangerud in which he interviewed a number of people who had lapsed into inactivity in their local congregation. He then grouped the reasons given into the following general categories:

- I. Disrupting events that suggest loss and change:
 - a. Wives starting to work.
 - b. Mobility from community to community.
 - c. Invalid parents moving into the home to stay.
 - d. Loss of significant supporting persons.
 - e. Birth of children and grandchildren.
 - f. Natural disaster.

¹¹Ibid., p. 52.

¹²Ibid.

- II. Underlying Predisposing Factors:
- a. Unresolved negative feelings
 - b. Unmet personal needs.
 - c. Unresolved nurture-service polarity, i.e., failure to resolve dual image of church as nurturing agency for children and task performing.
 - d. Undeveloped view of the church.¹³

¹³Richard D. Vangerud, "A study of Certain Inactive Members in a local Congregation," Journal of Pastoral Care, XXII:1 (March 1968), 7-20.

Chapter 3

WHY PEOPLE "OUGHT TO GO TO CHURCH

Sooner or later even the most successful answer to the question, "What is our business?" becomes obsolete....Management therefore also needs to add "And what will it be?" and the next question... "What should our business be?"¹

Individuals have goals. They may be conscious or subconscious. They may drift into them or they may declare them. In reviewing the previous chapter as to the reasons why people join a church there is quite obviously a great deal of variability in the reasons given. They are mixed, complex and interrelated. Each person brings to the church membership his own "package" of motivations. One may conclude that many of these reasons appear to be basically selfish reasons. One hesitates to label these "selfish" reasons as being unworthy. The conflict arises when these reasons are compared to the objectives of the church as a local organization and the Church universal.

In this section on "Why People Ought to Go to Church" I am really endeavoring to summarize the purposes of the Church as an organization or as an institution. Stating the formal goals, or purpose, of the Church is not as easy as one would think. It is an area within which there is considerable disagreement. The constant debates that go on within the Church, the divisions that reflect

¹Peter F. Drucker, Management (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 88,89.

differing views, the difficulty of broad cooperation between groups, all point to the fact that there is really no final, authoritative determination of the purpose of the church that all will accept. Perhaps this contributes toward the generality and the vagueness of the Church's expression of its goals.

A Functional Conception of the Church

Bishop Stephen Neill gives six different senses in which the word "Church" is commonly used.² First, there is the mystical sense, as the Bride of Christ, the indefectable, exalted Church which cannot err or fail. Second, it can refer to the fellowship of all redeemed in all ages, whose number is known to God alone, the "invisible Church." Third, it is the body of all who within history share in God's covenant of grace, through fellowship within the body, which is the appointed channel of that grace. Fourth, it is used to describe a particular local church, a fellowship of such bodies being called churches. Fifth, the term in modern usage as employed in the fourth sense but extended to cover an entire nation, i.e., "The Church of England." Sixth, the term applies to a denomination.

These, and other differing conceptions, could easily lead to considerable confusion. Theologically, I would accept the second and third senses as given by Bishop Neill with special emphasis upon the

²Stephen Neill, The Christian Society (London: Nisbet, 1952)

words: "fellowship," "redeemed," "invisible," "covenant," "grace," "body." Sociologically, I would emphasize the fourth sense in which the word "Church" is commonly used.

When a corporation is challenged as overstepping its privileges the question which must be settled is, "What does the corporation's charter say?" When the Church undertakes new activities that move in directions that people challenge, a natural and necessary question is, "What does the Bible say?" The biblical record is presumed to set forth the nature and purpose of the Church. The Bible is the source book of our Christian faith, the record of God's revelation of himself to man. The Church ought to be whatever God intended it to be, and we search the Scriptures to discover God's intention for the Church.

When we turn to the New Testament, however, to see what the church is and should be like, we find little in the way of dictionary definitions or legal requirements, or even of prose descriptions of the Church. Instead, we find a series of Church-pictures, metaphors, figures of speech, or images of the Church. These poetic images suggest that the Church is a living organism, that it is not many organisms but one, that it is a special kind of community with designated functions, that it displays certain qualities which we usually associate with marriage, and that it shows a primary loyalty to God revealed in Jesus Christ. The most familiar of the Church-pictures is the Body of Christ. "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it...just as the body is one and has members..."

so it is with Christ. For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body." (I Corinthians 12: 27, 12, 13). Four hundred years ago, Theresa of Avila observed: "Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which is to look out Christ's compassion to the world, yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good; and yours are the hands with which he is to bless us now."

In looking for a functional conception of the Church there are three basic ideas that are vital: (1) The Church is of God; (2) It was chosen for the purpose of making known God's love; (3) From the outset the Church was a community of persons, the people of God.

The Church is of God. The order for the reception into one Protestant Church begins, "Dearly beloved, the Church is of God, and will be preserved to the end of time."³ This concept of the divine origin of the Church is basic to the understanding of its nature. The Church is not the result of man's decision or planning; it is not just another human institution; it is of God. "The Church exists because God intended it to exist."⁴

"The historical root of the Church is in the covenant which

³The Book of Worship For Church and Home (Nashville: Methodist Publishing House, 1965), p.12.

⁴William E. Hordern, Living By Grace (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975)

Abraham and his children entered into with Yahweh their God."⁵ God's call of Abraham and the covenant initiated with Israel at that time are continuous through Christ and the new Israel of the New Testament community. The Scriptures are clear that God called Abraham, and therefore God initiated the covenant. Abraham responded to God's command, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing" (Genesis 12:1-2). In responding, Israel became God's chosen community. This concept of community remained a central concern throughout the Old Testament, continued into the New Testament concept of the Church, and is still basic today.

The Church was chosen for a purpose. God did not choose Israel because she was powerful, good, religious or in any way merited the choice. As the writer of Deuteronomy reminds Israel, "It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love upon you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples; but it was because the Lord loves you" (Deuteronomy 7:7-8a). The only reason for the choice of Israel was God's love, and that was unmerited.

⁵Daniel T. Jenkins, The Strangeness of the Church (New York: Doubleday, 1955), p.25.

Studies such as those of Samuel Blizzard, Roy W. Fairchild, and J. C. Wynn indicate that Americans have largely ceased to think theologically about the ministry. Rather than practicing the priesthood of the whole body of Christ, the vast majority of those interviewed looked upon the church functionally, in terms of what the minister did for the church, and in turn, what the church did for them. One minister vexed with his self-centered congregation exclaimed: "This church wants to be served, not to serve!" Fairchild and Wynn reported only a remnant of laymen who view the church as a redemptive society and feel that they have a personal part in its ministry. They believe, though, that this remnant is alive and growing.⁶

The Church is a people of God; it was chosen by God's initiative; and it was chosen for the purpose of making known God's love -- and this includes service even to the threat of its very existence.

A Church must not overlook the fact that it exists for unselfish, active service to society, to individuals and groups and even to its opponents. If it does so, it loses its dignity, its claim and the reason for its existence, since it abandons discipleship... if its strength lies in the cross of the risen Christ, then its weakness is its strength, and it can go on its way without fear of losing its identity. The promise has been made that, if it gives up its life, it will gain it.⁷

⁶ Roy W. Fairchild and J. C. Wynn, Families in the Church (New York: Association Press, 1961), p. 174-180.

⁷ Hans K  ng, On Being a Christian (New York: Doubleday, 1976), p. 506.

As the Apostle Paul wrote, "Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Jesus Christ, who, though he was in the form of God did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant" (Philip. 2:5-7a).

The Church is a Community of Persons. The third basic idea for a functional conception of the Church is that the Church from the outset was a community of persons, to whom and through whom God's love is revealed. Few ideas are more clear in the Old Testament than that God's concern is for a community or a nation. The idea is just as basic to the New Testament concept of the Church as to the Old Testament. From the outset the Christian Church was a community of those who had experienced the presence of the risen Christ. From the very first to be a Christian meant to belong to a community. The concept of the Church as the "Community of Saints" is vital to Martin Luther's view of the Church.

We have seen that Luther interprets comunio sanctorum, commonly translated "the communion of saints," in the Apostles' Creed in apposition to "the holy Christian Church," that is, it explains what the Church is. This is decisive for Luther's understanding of this doctrine.⁸

Surely the New Testament accounts are clear that no one thought it possible to be a Christian "by oneself" but only in relationship to the fellowship of believers. The common bond of the community

⁸Paul Althaus, The Theology of Martin Luther (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), p.294.

was that all had received the gift of God's grace through the living Christ. The purpose of God's calling the Church into being is to make known His love, and this is to be done not just by priests or by individuals, but through the witness of the entire church community. The corporate nature of the Church is clearly indicated in a passage such as Ephesians 2:19, "So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God." No Christian stands alone. Each is a part of a fellowship, a household, a community.

In looking for a functional conception of the Church I would conclude that the Church of God's chosen people, i.e., it is initiated by God. It is chosen for a purpose, that of making known God's love. And the divine task belongs to all the members of the Church, which is a community in fellowship.

Traditional Marks of the Church

In looking at a church how then do we determine if it is truly the Church? Are there any signs, or marks, or fulfilled purposes to indicate if it truly qualifies?

The problem of false churches is as old as Christianity itself. Since the first century, efforts have been made in every generation to establish criteria for determining the truth of Christianity.⁹

⁹ Avery Dulles, Models of the Church (New York: Doubleday, 1974), p.116.

The most frequently quoted "marks of the true Church are the four adjectives which were applied to the Church by the Council of Constantinople in 381 in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed that: "We believe...(in) the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church."¹⁰

On the Catholic side Cardinal Hosius in 1553 maintained that the true Church could be recognized by the four marks of the Creed. Bellarmine listed fifteen notes, but at the same time observed that they could be reduced to the four notes of the Creed. The catechism of the Council of Trent used the four notes, and after some variations (reaching as high as the one hundred notes listed by Tommaso Bozio...), the traditional four became standard in Catholic apologetics since Tournely's work of 1726.¹¹

These marks are also accepted by many Protestant theologians including Emil Brunner.¹² In this paper I am looking for "marks" that are functional, observable, even measurable (if possible). Both K  ng and Dulles feel that these traditional marks do just that and K  ng devotes the last half of his book, The Church developing them. I feel that they are too subjective and have been used too often in the past to exclude elements which differ with them. It is interesting that Vatican Council II, instead of using them as devices for "distinguishing between the true Church and its counterfeits...treats the four adjectives as attributes of the Church of Christ, to which Christians confess allegiance in the creed, rather than directly as

¹⁰Hans K  ng, The Church (New York: Doubleday, 1967) p. 341.

¹¹Dulles, p. 117.

¹²Emil Brunner, The Christian Doctrine of the Church, Faith and the Consumation (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1950).

attributes of the Roman Catholic Church."¹³ The tendency seems to be in the direction of describing these traditional "marks" as qualities of the Church.

Due to their importance historically, I would like to try to sum these "qualities" briefly before I move on to other "marks".

The Church is One. The Church has many segments, but it is one because God gave it unity when he created it and placed it under the Lordship of Christ. And he continues to give unity to his body, the Church, which consists of persons who make up the faithful people of God, each sharing in the communion of the Holy Spirit. Christ and his church are inseparable. All Christians incorporated in Christ form the one body of which he is the head. "He is the head of the body, the Church" (Col. 1:18.)

The Church is Holy. Holiness derives from God, and the Church's holiness results from God's ownership of the Church and the presence of the Holy Spirit in its life. No one should suppose that because the Church is a divine institution, all of its members live exemplary, much less sinless lives. They are not without sin. But they are "saints" i.e., those whom God has separated unto himself.

Luther brought down the community of saints...out of heaven and down to earth...all who believe in Christ are saints.¹⁴

¹³Ibid., p. 117-118.

¹⁴Althaus, p. 298.

Occasionally we describe the church as a voluntary association of like-minded individuals who meet together to help themselves and others to think about and engage in activities that will help them to live better lives. But this sort of thinking leaves God out of the picture. God has chosen the members of his Church and he has chosen them for a purpose: "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (I Peter 2:9).

The Church is Catholic. "Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all" (Colossians 3:11). The first meaning of the word "catholic," according to Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, is simply "universal or general." There is also (in addition to geographical universality) a universality in its purpose: to heed the command of Christ who, speaking with the full authority of his resurrection power and with the clear consciousness of the universality of God's love, said: "Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19), and thus to give answers to man's universal need for forgiveness and salvation.

The Church is Apostolic. This is one of the traditional "marks" that was sometimes used to exclude those from other than the Roman Catholic tradition. In the concept of apostolic succession the Roman Catholics consider Peter to have had special authority, which he transmitted through the apostles and the popes to the present time.

This special authority, they believe, has been transmitted in a line of unbroken succession (i.e., the laying on of hands in ordination). Protestants reject this. When the Bible says that the Church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets" (Ephesians 2:20), we take it to mean the faith and the message of the apostles. The core message of the Church today is the Word proclaimed as in the days of the earliest Christians. When the Church is most faithful to the apostolic teaching it is most obedient to the will and love of God.

In turning to the Reformation we see that there was considerable energy expended among Protestant and Roman Catholic theologians debating how to identify the true Church. Usually, Luther, Melancthon, and Calvin acknowledged only two notes but Luther, upon occasion, expanded this to seven notes:

1. The preaching of the true word of God.
2. The proper administration of baptism.
3. The correct form of the Lord's Supper.
4. The power of the keys.
5. The lawful vocation and ordination of ministers.
6. Prayer and the singing of the psalms in the vernacular.
7. Persecutions.¹⁵

In Luther's violent polemic "Against Hans Worst" (1541) he makes additional requirements:

1. The apostolic creed and the faith of the primitive Church.
2. Respect for the secular power.

¹⁵ Martin Luther, "On the Councils and the Churches, 1539," in his Works (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), XLI, 164-167.

4. A high estimation of the married state,¹⁶
5. Tolerance and prayer for persecutors.

The problem with these marks as given by Luther is that they were too exclusive. They identified a personal conception of the church but not the Church. They were not given as a recognition of the Church universal, the Body of Christ, but seemingly more as reactions "against" rather than action "for." In his calmer moods Luther, along with the majority of the reformers, accepted the two classic signs of the Protestant movement as voiced in the Augsburg Confession: "the preaching of the Gospel in accordance with Scripture and the administering of the sacraments as divinely ordained."¹⁷ Where the pure Gospel is preached and where the sacraments are duly administered, then there is the Church. Where these things do not take place, then however impressive all the other associated phenomena, there is not the Church.

The Declaration of the Word of God. The preaching of the Gospel to Luther was the most important mark of the Church. "For the gospel is the unique, the most certain, and the most noble sign of the Church - more so even than the bread and baptism; for it is through the gospel alone that the Church is conceived, formed, nourished, born, trained, fed, clothed, cared for, strengthened, armed and preserved."¹⁸

¹⁶ Martin Luther, "Against Hans Worst, 1541," in his Works, XLI, 195-218.

¹⁷ The Book of Concord (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), p.32.

¹⁸ Althaus, p.289.

He also declared that, "God's word cannot exist without God's people and God's people cannot exist without God's word."¹⁹ By the declaration of the word of God the reformers meant primarily the transmission of the message of redemption in Christ, together with the consequences and ramifications of it. This means that at least two persons are necessary to form a church, one who speaks and one who hears.

The Administration of the Sacraments is the other generally accepted "mark" of the Church as conceived by the reformers. They believed that the sacraments should never be divorced from the Word, for they have no content of their own, but derive their content from the preaching of the Word of God. They are in fact a visible preaching. For them Word and sacraments are two aspects of the one activity of God in Christ. We hear the Word of God with our ears. We perceive the Word of God with our other senses, principally, perhaps, with our eyes. "It must be external so that it can be perceived and grasped and thus brought into the heart."²⁰

The decisive element in the sacrament is accordingly the word of promise. The sacrament is nothing without the word. It has no other effect than the word of promise does. The promise, however, is always the promise of the forgiveness of sins.²¹

These are the "marks" by which the Church was recognizable to the reformers. But this means recognizable only to the eyes of faith for, to them, it is not a sensory recognition. Just because there is preaching and administration of the sacraments one cannot know that

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., p.346.

²¹Ibid.

there the church is the Church. It is only recognizable to the believer via the eyes of faith.

The church is so deeply hidden that no one can see or know it but only grasp and believe it in baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the word. The eyes of the world cannot see that it is the church of Christ.²²

These "marks" of the true Church of the reformers and also the classical four traits of the Roman Catholic Church are useful as guidelines but have limited value in distinguishing whether or not a church is being the Church.

They are not visible and serve to show where the Church is hidden, Protestant Church from the Catholic Church or from enthusiast²³ sects. ~~It is, it seems more and more difficult to distinguish the Protestant Church from the Catholic Church or from enthusiast sects.~~²³

A criticism of the Roman Catholic four credal notes comes from a Roman Catholic, Avery Dulles, who says that they were "ineffective because the argument depended on an understanding of the four notes that only a convinced Roman Catholic- and not every Roman Catholic at that!- could accept. There was little basis in Scripture or in early tradition for understanding unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity as visible marks of an organized society."²⁴

Some Functional Marks of the Church

The remainder of this chapter is going to deal with some marks

²² Ibid., p.291.

²³ Kung, The Church, pp. 346,347.

²⁴ Dulles, p.120.

that I believe are more functional and visible "marks" of the Church. In the preceding quote by Avery Dulles he refers to the Church as an "organized society." Perhaps the marks for an organized society would be more easily recognizable if they were more sociologically oriented. The "marks" that I am proposing are more sociological, more functional, and, I trust, more recognizable. They are also less exclusive since they are not emanating from a polemic against any other specific faith. These marks could also be considered goals, purposes, or over-all objectives.

A functional way of identifying an organization is to ask what the organization is trying to do, or is supposed to do, and whether or not it is doing it. One of the best sources for what the Church is trying to do is, I believe, their creeds and statements of faith. Some examples include the following:

The great ends of the Church are the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of men; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God, the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.²⁵

Dearly beloved, the Church is of God, and will be preserved to the end of time, for the promotion of his worship and the due administration of his word and ordinances, the maintenance of Christian fellowship and discipline, the edification of believers, and the conversion of the world.²⁶

He calls us into his Church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be his servants in the service of men, to proclaim the

²⁵"The Directory of Worship" (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1958), Ch.III, Sec.4.

²⁶The Book of Worship for Church and Home, p.141.

gospel to all the world and to resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.²⁷

Throughout these and other statements of faith and purpose for the Church as an organization, four primary themes are dominant. These themes, marks, or purposes are:

1. Worship
2. Fellowship
3. Nurture (Christian education)
4. Outreach (evangelism and social action)

On the surface these four points may seem to differ considerably from the two main points of the reformers. However, I believe that they closely parallel them and are primarily a restatement of their "marks" in more measurable and recognizable points in terminology more familiar to a pragmatic age symbolized by the so-called "organization man."

Worship. I believe that the most important mark of the Church is worship. Christian worship is ascribing to God, as revealed through Jesus Christ, the glory and worth he is due, in response to his divine initiative. The psalmist proclaims, "Give unto the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts" (Ps. 96:8). "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised" (Ps. 96:4). Here the tone is set for our giving praise to God: we ascribe to him the glory he is due. Ralph Martin points out that the term "worship" comes into our modern speech from the Anglo-Saxon "weorthscipe." This word developed into "worthship," and finally into "worship." The

²⁷ "Statement of Faith," as approved by the Second General Synod of the United Church of Christ, 1959.

word means, "to attribute worth to an object." Martin adds, "to worship God is to ascribe Him supreme worth, for He alone is worthy."²⁸ As such, worship on earth is a faint shadow of what is going on right now in heaven. Though we see through a glass dimly, the Church on earth looks unto God and joins the heavenly hosts, praising him for all he is and all he has done.

Worship, then, is predicated on God's prevenience and initiative. God, in his very nature, acts boldly in reaching to man. He is the giver of every good and perfect gift (James 1:17). He is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe (Col. 1:16,17), the loving God in his saving mercy in Christ (Eph. 1:3 ff.), and the One who has called us into the new community (I Peter 1:9). God has clearly acted in history on our behalf. As Wilhelm Hahn states:

The initiative in (worship) lies with God. He is the primary subject. Worship is first and foremost God's service to us. It is an action by God, directed towards us. Our activity in worship can be nothing other than reaction and response, the consequence of God's activity.²⁹

He then quotes Luther, "that our Lord Himself may speak to us through His holy word, and that we in turn may speak to Him through our prayers and hymns of praise."³⁰ Our response in worship takes the form of praise, love, commitment and obedience for all that he has

²⁸ Ralph Martin, Worship in the Early Church (Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1964), p.10.

²⁹ Wilhelm Hahn, Worship and Congregation (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963), p.15.

³⁰ Ibid.

done for us, individually and as community. I believe that the three points, previously given under "a functional conception of the Church," should be obvious in all of the marks of the Church. The Church is chosen by God. It is chosen to make known God's love. And it is a community of persons.

The question is frequently raised, "Why can't I worship God on my own- in my car, on the beach, on top of a mountain, etc.?"- without ever gathering with other Christians to worship in a community of persons? In I Corinthians Paul teaches that the Church is the body of people that are related to Christ and related to one another. God's redemptive work has always taken place in community. For an individual to deny oneself the opportunity of worshipping with one's family in Christ is to completely misunderstand the nature of the new community. As John Calvin said, "He who voluntarily deserts the external communion of the Church where the word of God is preached, and the sacraments are administered is without any excuse."³¹ We need one another to worship God. We need one another to be built up together in worship.

A true corporate worship experience is a congregation that is in fellowship with God and with one another and that is offering itself to God in thanksgiving, confession, praise and commitment. According to a study by the United Presbyterian Church, "...research has found increasing individualism...since the 1950's. We believe this underlying value shift in American life has contributed to church membership

³¹ John Calvin, Compend of the Institutes (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1939), p.158.

loss."³² A worshipping congregation should be more than a collection of individuals carrying on their private devotions. Rather it ought to be a body of Christians offering themselves corporately as well as individually to God. The organized Church has the task of providing the necessary place, media of communication, staff and helpful symbols to encourage regular, corporate worship.

Fellowship. The importance of fellowship, or in the deeper sense of community, should be obvious by the preceding emphasis of its vital interrelatedness with worship. Unfortunately the concept of fellowship is misconstrued by the church today. Howard Grimes lists three misconceptions that church members often associate with fellowship.³³

1. Fellowship comes by way of human effort. This is the notion that fellowship can be produced like building a table. "If we all do the right things, we will have attained fellowship." Fellowship is achieved or earned by way of human activity. Yet the New Testament teaches that Christian fellowship with one another is a gift of the Holy Spirit, that which is received by faith.

2. Fellowship is a separate phase of the work of the church. People often think of fellowship as being less important than other matters in the church, such as worship, teaching, or the sacraments.

³²Membership Trends (General Assembly Mission Council United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1976), p.42.

³³Howard Grimes, The Church Redemptive (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), pp.48, 49.

As a result, fellowship is often relegated to the youth group (which is often identified as a "fellowship" by name), or to some evening church meeting during the week. Yet Paul's letter to the Corinthians stresses corporate fellowship with one another as curcial to one's fellowship with Christ. The two function with mutual reciprocity. In particular, one's fellowship with one's brother is necessary for one's union with Christ. As Emil Brunner wrote, "The togetherness of Christian men is not secondary, or contingent; it is integral to their abiding in Christ."³⁴

3. Fellowship with God is "spiritual"; fellowship with one another is more or less "human." Often one sees the horizontal aspect of Christian fellowship as that which is "less spiritual" than one's relationship to Christ. Yet this attitude is in direct contradiction with Christ's high view of fellowship in community. As our Lord taught, when two or three gather in his name, Christ is present in a special, even tangible way in and through one another (Mt. 18:20). Fellowship on the horizontal level does not detract from the vertical. On the contrary, openness to one another encourages the Christian towards new openness to Christ.

Behind the word "fellowship with whatever accompanying misconceptions have arisen with the nomenclature, stands the Greek word koinonia. To quote Grimes, "There is an increasing awareness

³⁴ Emil Brunner, The Christian Doctrine of the Church, Faith and the Consummation (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1950), p.12.

....that near the heart of the meaning of the church is the concept of koinonia."³⁵ Beach points out that "in the New Testament we find koinonia playing a major role in the whole range of Christian doctrine,"³⁶ from sharing in fellowship with God through Jesus (I Jn. 1:3), to fellowship in our community among Christians (I Jn. 1:7), and to our partaking of Christ in the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 10:17).

The concept of a community in fellowship was an extremely major emphasis with the reformers.

....the vital point here is that the reformers added to this institutional concept the further concept of the Church as an association of believing souls; a community....it was Calvin in particular who recognized this....The great difference between the 'Catholic' and the 'Protestant' conceptions of the Church lies in the role of the community. For Rome, the community is relatively unimportant....The Roman Catholic Church could subsist without the community. The community is a valuable manifestation of the Christian qualities of the Church. For Protestantism, on the other hand, the community is essential and fundamental.³⁷

For our purposes, koinonia can be defined as the common participation and mutual interest in a common object. Limiting its use to the relatedness of the Christian community, koinonia describes the fellowship one has with Christ and the reciprocal relationships that exist between him and the members of Christ's body. The Christian community shares a common participation in Christ, and, as well, a common participation with one another.

³⁵Grimes, p.12.

³⁶Waldo Beach, Christian Community (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969), p.172.

³⁷J.S. Whale, The Protestant Tradition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), pp. 168-170.

The concept of fellowship, or "the communion of saints" as Calvin would call it, was given much richer meaning by the Reformers than we usually do. Calvin reminds us that, "In the Creed, the communion of saints is immediately followed by the forgiveness of sins...this benefit belongs to the Church; so that we cannot enjoy it unless we continue in its communion."³⁸

I would have placed the sacrament of the Lord's Supper under the subject "worship" but it is interesting to note that Luther in "The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods," emphasizes that, "The significance or effect of this sacrament is fellowship of all the saints...to receive this sacrament.. is nothing else than to receive a sure sign of this fellowship and incorporation with Christ and all saints."³⁹ The participation in this sacrament "both guarantees and expresses the reality of the church as the community of saints."⁴⁰ By means of this sacrament "we are changed into one another and are made into a community by love."⁴¹

³⁸ Calvin, p. 159.

³⁹ Martin Luther, "Blessed Sacrament of the True and Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods," in his Works (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1960), XXXV, 50, 51.

⁴⁰ Althaus, p. 318.

⁴¹ Luther, "Blessed Sacrament," XXXV, 58.

No single concept in relationship to the nature, or the purpose of the Church is more fundamental than that of its reality as the redemptive fellowship. The cultivation and expression of the sacred koinonia is vital. The first duty of the Church is to be the Church, the outward embodiment of the spirit of Christ. This is also one of leading themes in current theology, i.e., the congregation as community. It emphasizes the importance of the quality of personal relationships in contrast to the formal associations that result from mere participation in a structured organization. It is a sense of community among the members of a congregation which centers around shared beliefs and the ritual rehearsals of them. It also centers around a quality of trust and honesty that supports and comforts the members. It is a fellowship of a quality that encourages candor and fosters a sense of security.

Nurture (Christian Education). I believe that worship and fellowship (community) are the two most vital marks in authenticating a church as part of the Church. They are essential and should be obvious. If a church is truly functioning as it should the following marks (nurture and outreach) become more and more visible.

The Apostle Paul writes that Christ, "that he might fill all things gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the

Son of God" (Eph. 4: 10-13). Christian education takes place with the Christian community. This means that we must take the concept of koinonia seriously if we are to educate people to be the Church.

Calvin emphasized the importance of preaching as a teaching tool.

We see that though God could easily make his people perfect in a single moment, yet it was not his will that they should grow to mature age, but under the education of the Church. We see the means expressed; the preaching of the heavenly doctrine is assigned to the pastors.⁴²

Pastors, however, cannot do it all for,

He not only requires us to be attentive to reading, but has appointed teachers for our assistance...it is a good proof of our obedience when we listen to his ministers...on the other hand he has provided for our infirmity, by choosing to address us through the medium of human interpreters.⁴³

Christian nurture takes place within the Christian community as it exists in the family, in the organized Church, and in other groups which bring into being relationships which have true Christian meaning. Luther expressed his concern for Christian education in the home when he prepared the Small Catechism (1529) for use in the home by the head of the family. His reason for writing the book is stated at the very beginning of the Preface:

The deplorable condition which I recently encountered when I was a visitor constrained me to prepare this brief and simple catechism or statement of Christian teaching...The Common people, especially those who live in the country, have no knowledge whatever of Christian teaching, and unfortunately many pastors

⁴²Calvin, p. 154.

⁴³Ibid.

are quite incompetent and unfitted for teaching.⁴⁴

Luther here recognizes the importance of the home in assuming its partnership with the Church in its nurturing task. The Church must be the manifestation of the kind of community that our homes ought to be. Partnership between home and church is not fulfilled when parents see their children study their church school lesson. It is only fulfilled when both church and home seek to be obedient to the Lord who is their authority.

Christian nurture is a necessary mark for any church to have a future for it "prepares and equips persons to be the church."⁴⁵

Some of the processes involved in nurture include:

..introducing persons to the Christian community, introducing them to the Bible and the Christian heritage, preparing the way for personal response to revelation, participating with them in purposeful action, and counseling with them during periods of crisis.⁴⁶

Christian nurture also reflects the three basic ideas vital for a functional conception of the Church; the Church is chosen by God; it is chosen to make known God's love; and it is a community of persons. As Paul wrote, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth" (I Cor. 3:6). The planting and the watering are the

⁴⁴Martin Luther, Small Catechism, as quoted in George F. Harkins, The Church and Her Work (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1960), p. 32.

⁴⁵Robert D. Witham, "Education: The Whole Church's Dilemma," New Conversations, 1:3 (1976), 28.

⁴⁶Lewis Sherrill, The Gift of Power (New York: Macmillan, 1958), p.11.

the human task; the growth is the divine gift. Christian nurture takes place within the Christian community. It in turn helps to plant the seeds, to till the soil, for the inception of true community. The church must teach to be the Church. Indeed, as it teaches, it becomes more truly the Church. In the fellowship of searching, of learning, of seeking together, and of responding corporately to God's initiative, true koinonia may emerge.

Outreach. Stephen Neill suggests that those who are members of the body of Christ need three conversions: to Christ, to the Church, and to the world as God's creation. They may not come in that order, but all three are necessary for the fully matured Christian to become aware of one's responsibility to God and to others. Any one of these without the others can lead to an unhealthy lack of balance: loyalty to Christ can become introverted pietism, loyalty to the church can become ecclesiastical "churchianity," and loyalty to God's world can become humanitarian activism.⁴⁷ The Christian as a missionary, who himself has these three aspects of loyalty in proper balance, will seek out others in terms of the same balance. This is why the missionary must always come from the Church, seeing the Church as a community (a community of persons; chosen by God; to make known God's love) of persons loyal to Jesus Christ in the world.

⁴⁷ Stephen Neill, The Unfinished Task (London: Lutterworth Press, 1957), p. 50, 51.

Every person is impelled by the Spirit of God to perform various acts of kindness and useful generosity through many institutional channels and in direct personal relations with his neighbors... More than this the church must do. It must proclaim, by word and deed combined, the good news of salvation...the Church must (also) raise its voice in prophetic warning against the social evils in all the institutions of the day.⁴⁸

Every congregation has a dual role to perform in the world evangelistic in relation to those outside and pastoral in relation to those within. We should not try to separate these tasks for they are two aspects of a single life. Citizens in the pagan world of the first century watched love at work in the life of the Christian community and were won by what they saw and felt. It is unfortunate that the role of evangelism has been divided into social action and the evangelistic emphasis upon personal conversion. It is unfortunate in that often people seem to emphasize one aspect to the virtual neglect of the other.

Both aspects were emphasized by various of the Reformers. Calvin's doctrine of the state, or civil government is basic to those involved in social action.

...it has come about not by human perversity that the authority over all things on earth is in the hands of kings and other fulers, but by divine providence and holy ordinance. For God was pleased so to rule the affairs of men, inasmuch as he is present with them and also presides over the making of laws and the exercising of equity in the courts of justice.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ L. Harold DeWolf, A Theology of the Living Church (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953), p. 322, 323.

⁴⁹ John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, IV, 20, 4 as quoted by Benjamin Reist, "Church and State in America" in Robert Lee and Martin Marty (eds.) Religion and Social Conflict (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 127.

The Great Commission and "right" faith was basic to the outreach of the Anabaptists. "Our faith stands on nothing other than the command of Christ (Mt.28, Mk.16)..For Christ didn't say to his disciples: go forth and celebrate the Mass, but go forth and preach the Gospel."⁵⁰

Vital to Luther's concept of outreach was one's identification with those in need (spiritual and physical).

The children of God do not want to go into heaven alone but rather wish to bring along the most sinful people if they are able...We enter into the brother's filth and shame in order to help him out of his sins...We become his fellow prisoners so that he may be free, and we become companions in his fall so that he may stand up and walk. ...The real substance of every ecclesiastical office is its pastoral care of sinners through the proclamation of the gospel to individuals.⁵¹

The history of the early Church as recorded in the book of Acts is filled with illustrations of the Church as a witnessing community to the world (both in social action and personal evangelism). Out of the first Church's life together, mission was born. As these believers journeyed inward in fellowship, they journeyed outward in love, service and proclamation. Likewise, today, as members of Christ's body who become Jesus Christ to each other, the members of the Church dare to let this community love overflow beyond their fellowship and into the world.

⁵⁰ Franklin H. Littell, The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism (New York: Macmillan, 1964), p.111.

⁵¹ Althaus, p. 311, 312.

Wilhelm Pauck has written of the reformers' intentions for ministry at the time of the Reformation: "(Every believer) must express faith in loving social action and thereby communicate it to others. All Christians are such ministers; they cannot but bring about a new kind of society- the fellowship of believers."⁵²

⁵²Wilhelm Pauck in H. Richard Niebuhr and Daniel Day Williams (eds.) The Ministry in Historical Perspectives (New York: Harper & Row, 1956), p.112.

Chapter 4

SOME PROBLEM AREAS

Can There Be One Goal?

Kurt Lewin was one of the first to note what common sense tells us about conflicts. He said that those who have differences with others can resolve those differences and be brought together by explicitly attending to larger convictions on which they are agreed. It is like drawing a circle that excludes others and then drawing a circle that includes them. By noting agreements persons are brought together in commitment to larger concerns that are bigger than their differences. This does not mean that their differences are not considered to be important. It does mean, however, that there are some things upon which we can all agree and which unite us above and beyond our differences.

The classic statement of this problem in relation to the Church was made by Richard Niebuhr when he asks the question: "Is there one goal to which all other goals are subordinate, not necessarily as means to end, but as proximate objectives that should be sought only in relation to a final purpose?"¹ In answer to his question Niebuhr states that there is indeed a prime, over-arching purpose of the Church: "No substitute can be found for the

¹H. Richard Niebuhr, The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), p.28.

definition of the goal of the church as the increase among men of the love of God and neighbor."²

My argument with this statement is that he has drawn the circle too large. Most of the world's other great religions can also claim this as their goal. In searching for a unifying motto behind which all Christian churches could rally, the ecumenical movement emerged with the rallying cry that "Jesus is Lord!" From the point of view of church administration I would prefer the statement of Lyle E. Schaller who writes that the goal of the Church is: "Enabling the children of God, who comprise the Body of Christ, the Church, to become what, by God's grace, they can become, and to do what, by God's grace, they can do."³ I prefer this "circle" because it is more discriminating in limiting the Church to the Body of Christ and is wide enough to include worship, fellowship, nurture, and outreach.

Survival of the Institution

The "is and the "ought" of church membership as presented can be said to be a conflict between the goals of the individual member and the formal goals of the church as an institution. One goal has not been mentioned in this study. The difficulty with this goal is

²Ibid., p.31.

³Lyle E. Schaller and Charles A. Tidwell, Creative Church Administration (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), p.66

the question of its legitimacy as contrasted with its obvious practicality. Is survival a worthy goal?

When it comes right down to the fact of the matter, most local churches are no longer goal-oriented institutions. They are primarily maintenance systems.⁴

Survival goals are those ends which the participants feel must be sought if the congregation is to continue as an organization. They involve operations that apparently must be carried out if the social structure of the congregation is not to dissolve. In specific terms, the survival goals are: the recruiting and maintaining of members; the establishment of physical facilities; paying the minister's salary and the stabilization of financial support.

Although Lyle Schaller elsewhere argues against the validity of survival as a goal he presents a sound argument for it in "Four basic propositions that should be a part of any discussion of the self-evaluation process in any organization:

1. Any organization...tends to turn in on itself and become primarily concerned with survival and service to the members rather than with serving those that are not members of that institution.
2. Every organization tends to move in the direction of redefining purpose in terms of institutional maintenance and survival.
3. Any organization, but especially the volunteer, nonprofit organization, that does not have tangible, highly visible, definable, and measurable goals tends to turn toward institutional maintenance as the primary concern of the organization.
4. Any organization that places the primary emphasis on "pushing its product" rather than on meeting the needs of its clientele tends to go out of business. Whenever an organization becomes insensitive to the needs of people and concentrates on "doing business in the same old way," it begins to find itself in

⁴Speed Leas, "The Uniqueness of the Church As a Management System," Christian Ministry, IV:1 (January 1973), 10.

institutional jeopardy.⁵

Additional support for the legitimacy of maintenance, or survival, as a goal for the church surprisingly comes from Peter Drucker in an interview for "The Christian Ministry."

(Question): You wrote, once, that the purpose of an organization always lies outside itself. Are religious organizations exceptions to that statement?

(Drucker's Reply): -Yes, In the first place, not all religious organizations are alike. The objectives of an order of cloistered nuns or of a larger suburban parish or of a diocese are quite different. I think we have to accept the fact that the first purpose of a religious organization is always in the congregation. And if you lose that you have nothing.⁶

Whenever you study the budget of the average church it is obvious that the bulk of its budget is geared towards the maintenance of the local church. If more than 15% of the money given goes for projects outside of maintenance, the church is exceptional. Survival goals are generally regarded as being concerned with the continuation of the organization without reference to its service to the formal goals. The confusion exists when survival and formal goals are mixed or even synonymous. This mixing of goals is evident in the small church and especially in the mission church. At this time they become a very real source of integration, both in the anticipation and in the actual work. In erecting a church building there is considerable evidence of seeing the developing fruits of one's labor.

⁵ Lyle E. Schaller, Parish Planning (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971), p.94,95.

⁶ Peter Drucker, "The Art of Doing the Important," Christian Ministry, III:5 (September 1972), 6.

The visibility of the efforts of the developing congregation in moving toward a realization of the survival goals is one of the chief contributors to group morale in this period of the life of the church. It becomes a driving force and a unifying activity. Unfortunately it can have a very serious let-down for the congregation at a later stage. Time and time again a group of church people have considerable zest for the development of the church but when the primary goal, the building of a place for the worship of God, is fulfilled disillusionment sets in. Erecting the building may be a right strategy but it is never an adequate goal.

James D. Glasse sums up my feelings very succinctly when he writes:

While there are some situations (what I call the "high rent district") in which the survival of the parish is the complete commitment of the congregation, it needs to be shown whether this is an adequate mission strategy for any parish. If there is nothing left after paying the rent, then the parish must consider whether it has any reason to exist. The purpose of maintenance is to prepare the parish for mission and ministry, just as the purpose of paying the rent is to free the pastor for an extended ministry.⁷

Formal goals and survival goals are not necessarily in conflict. As Glasse has said, the rent must be paid before the pastor can be freed for extended ministry. By the rent he means primarily three things: 1. preaching and worship. 2. teaching and pastoral care. 3. organization and administration.⁸

⁷James D. Glasse, Putting it Together in the Parish (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972) p. 56, 57.

⁸Ibid.

Obviously, too, the organization must exist in order to function. However, when the congregation becomes orientated around survival goals to the neglect of formal goals then we can talk about a conflict of goals. It is a special kind of conflict in which the elevation of secondary concerns brings about an eclipse of primary concerns.

The church should be willing to sacrifice itself in order to realize its primary goals. The theological assumption underlying this emphasis is that the church as God's instrument will not perish even if its present concrete expressions do. The congregation should be sufficiently dedicated to its formal goals that it is willing to risk not surviving as an organized unit. In practical terms this means that catering to the wishes of prominent members, shaping programs to that which will return financial rewards, and keeping to the middle ground so as not to antagonize anyone is an abandonment of the sacrificial character of the congregation and a dilution, if not a dissolving, of the formal goals of the church.

Motivation and Manipulation.

"How do we separate motivating from manipulating?" is a question that the religious leader should face. If one of my parishoners intimates that I am trying to get them to do something for the pastor's project then I must question whether or not I am attempting to manipulate or motivate. Is it good or bad? Most Christian leaders frown upon manipulation. Some see manipulation as getting somebody to do something which, if the manipulated realized

what was happening, they would at the least have misgivings. Benefits might accrue to the manipulated person but that would be incidental or secondary. In recent years some critics of the church have accused it of being more interested in what persons could mean to the church than in what the church might mean to persons.

The intricate lines of demarcation between motivating and manipulating can pose serious problems for the pastor. Is it right or wrong, or to get it done, for the wrong motive? In a previous parish I once motivated (or manipulated?) a board of trustees to accomplish a project that was clearly against their wishes. When I left that church to come to my present parish, one of my most vocal opponents came and thanked me for pushing my projects (including "going over their heads" on several occasions to the church council) even though he opposed it at the time. His response made me feel a little better but I am still not sure that I was all that "right". History is replete with illustrations of "good" being accomplished as a result of less than the highest motivation. I continually struggle with extrinsic motivators to attend Sunday School but the founder of the modern Sunday school movement, Robert Raikes, rewarded those who attended his school by paying them money. The new manager of the Los Angeles Dodgers is known as a motivator. In attempting to motivate a young Joe Ferguson that he should switch from the outfield to catching the manager, Tom Lasorda, told him that Mickey Cochrane, Bill Dickey and Ernie Lombardi had all made similar moves. "Those three were never outfielders," Lasorda was told by an

eavesdropper, after Ferguson had left. "I know that, " Lasorda said, "but Ferguson doesn't."⁹

One general principle that has been applied is to attempt to ascertain in any given instance just who is to be the primary beneficiary of the efforts of the motivator or the manipulator. Admittedly this is simplistic but there probably are no simple answers. I believe that the situation would be much clearer if in any given circumstance the ultimate objectives of the organization are clearly spelled out, where the goals have been articulated and reconciled directly with the over-all objectives, and where the individual's ultimate commitment and personal goals are in accord with these objectives.

Voluntariness.

Perhaps more than any other organization, the congregation is open to everyone as a participant. To become a member of most congregations it is necessary only to profess some sort of agreement with, and commitment to the general goals of the church. It is unique among most voluntary organizations in that it is committed to serve people of both sexes, all ages and all walks of life. Furthermore, the congregation is an organization whose members are

⁹ Ross Newman, Los Angeles Times (January 18, 1977), Sec.III, p.5, Col. 1.

free to disassociate themselves at any time. Even though there is some informal pressure from family, friends, and some communities to participation, yet it is clear that the congregation has a formidable task to maintain their allegiance. The task is additionally difficult because the Church asks members to commit themselves to service in all aspects of life rather than just as an extracurricular activity. It also asks for service that involves the sacrifice of some self-interest. Most organizations pay all, or most of its members a salary and therefore makes special demands upon them because of it. On the other hand the local church has very few, if any paid workers. In this respect the local church is one of the most complicated and sophisticated kinds of organizations in the world. It's one thing to lead a group of people who are dependent on the organization for their livelihood. It is quite another thing to motivate a group of people who are volunteers.

Human Differences of Individual Members.

The tremendous variety of different people in the typical congregation from all walks of life and of all ages makes it very difficult to achieve unanimity on any statement values. This places a heavy responsibility on the leadership for comprehensive understanding. "Any minister who has served a congregation for more than a few months is...likely to be distressed by the heterogeneity...it is also true that the heterogeneity of the congregation is seen as a limiting factor in negotiation to the extent that the minister is not

willing to affirm the values of pluralism."¹⁰

Paradoxically the opposite may become a problem. Often individuals choose a particular community in which to live and to worship because they closely approximate their values and outlook on life.

Will Herberg, Gibson Winter, Robert Brannon, and others have pointed to this identification of church members with cultural values, and they have lifted up in vivid fashion the limitations which such identification puts upon the acceptance of certain prophetic aspects of the Judeo-Christian heritage. It is very doubtful that a minister who is at severe odds with the value systems present in the area served by his or her church will find it an easy task to continue to encourage the church members to radically deny the values which they take for granted.¹¹

Closely related to this is what G. Douglas Lewis calls faith assumptions. Few people realize what a large part of our beliefs is based on unconscious, hidden assumptions. They are not easy to bring out into the open and we frequently fail to recognize their existence. Like the iceberg, nine-tenths of our assumptions lie below the conscious level. When analyzed, they prove to be odds and ends of information, or misinformation, gathered during our lifetime, or dogmas that have their roots in emotional conflicts.

Because of faith assumptions, differences in needs, and comprehension, we all view the world from different perceptual

¹⁰Thomas C. Campbell, "Arenas of Negotiation," in John Biersdorf (ed.) Creating an Intentional Ministry (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1976), p.46.

¹¹Ibid.

points of view.

....in this world nothing is known except from a particular perceptual point of view. This fact means that I may perceive my needs and goals and the behaviors appropriate to achieve them in one way, and other persons may perceive them quite differently. The conflicts between parents and child illustrate this fact rather dramatically. Parents often assume they know what the child's needs are better than the child and the parents are certain they know what goals the child should be working toward. As a result they prescribe a lot of behavior they think the child "ought" to be doing. The child on the other hand perceives his or her needs, goals, and appropriate behaviors differently and resists the pressure from the parents.¹²

Attitudes Toward Conflict.

....there are reasons why managements shy back from asking the question ("What is our business?" or "What should it be?"); the first is that the question causes controversy, argument, and disagreement.....People who have worked side by side for many years and who think that they know each other's thoughts suddenly realize with a shock that they are in fundamental disagreement.¹³

Conflict usually comes to the surface when persons disagree about what should be done or how to do it. In the past people seemed convinced that conflicts (or differences of opinion and interpretation) were hindrances to organizational life. Thus, conflicts were only to be resolved. Nowadays, conflict is seen to be healthy and invigorating in organizations. It is to be managed and directed. It is to be utilized.

¹²G. Douglas Lewis, "Church Organizational Development," in Biersdorf, p.137,138.

¹³Peter F. Drucker, Management (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), p.78.

James Dittes¹⁴ interprets conflict theologically and suggests it is a function of revelation. Whenever men are confronted with the gospel demands there is personal response. Differences should then be approached theologically as responses to God's revelation. They are not resistances simply because they do not fit expectations. Their validity and legitimacy should be accepted.

I believe it is important to note that conflict occurs only when there is something to quarrel about. For an issue to cause conflict it must touch people's lives in significant ways; and it must be an issue or event on which people feel some action can be taken. If the first condition is not present, there will be apathy or disinterest; if the second is missing, helplessness and despair.

Intentionality is a concept that is gaining increased attention by the various schools of management as well as by Church leaders. Instead of discovering one's goals after the fact or drifting into conclusions it becomes obvious that one accomplishes more by shooting at an obvious, observable target. Martin Marty believes that:

Tomorrow's Christian will be one because he or she has a project, an intention. The Christian person will be able to articulate the features of his personal quest....Intentional Christianity will inevitably call for gathering of people around intentions.¹⁵

¹⁴James E. Dittes, The Church in the Way (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967)

¹⁵Martin Marty, The Fire We Can Light (New York: Doubleday, 1973), p.182.

As people become even more intentional conflict will be escalated. Conflict then, is not something that can be avoided. The point is not to eliminate the conflict but rather to manage it creatively. We must choose either to be managed, or mastered, by conflict or to use it creatively. Conflict can become a primary way to achieve intimacy for it is primarily through conflict that we come to understand each other and are thereby enabled to push past the differences to the commonalities that link us. Conflict offers much potential for good since it clarifies the identities of individuals and organizations: it sharpens goals, and improves procedures; and it firms up a sense of loyalty among members of groups and leads to increased involvement.¹⁶

¹⁶Lewis Coser, The Function of Social Conflict (New York: Free Press, 1956)

Chapter 5

DEALING WITH THE CONFLICT

Goal Setting.

Goal Clarification. "Everyone knows why we are here. Let's get on with the job." This is a common enough opening for a meeting. But how often is it really true? Some organizations seem to exist only because they have always existed and for some reason people keep coming to their meetings. Their objective seems to have become that of filling meeting times rather than contributing to an over all objective. A group unaware of its purpose is a rudderless ship. There is a common saying that, "If you don't care where you're going, any road will take you there."

That business purpose and business mission are so rarely given adequate thought is perhaps the most important single cause of business frustration and business failure. Conversely, in outstanding businesses such as the Telephone Company or Sears, success always rests to a large extent on raising the question "What is our business?" clearly and deliberately, and on answering it thoughtfully and thoroughly.¹

In joining a voluntary organization people affiliate themselves with the organization for any number of personal reasons that have little to do with the formal goals of the group. This is also true of the church. "Studies have consistently shown that persons

¹Peter F. Drucker, Management (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), p.78.

join churches for reasons which are not closely tied to the conscious theological traditions of the church chosen."² This results in a membership of great diversity and opens it up to the possibility of increased misunderstanding, confusion, and conflict. Vagueness in the definition of formal goals contributes to what Burton R. Clark calls "precarious values."

Social values tend to be precarious when they are undefined. This concerns the link between general value conceptions and a proximate set of goals and norms. Values are undefined when they are not embodied in existing goals and standards of committed groups. They lack specific normative reference and no one knows what various symbols really mean.³

The vagueness of a goal does not in itself make conflict inevitable, but it is a condition from which conflict can easily develop. Because the formal goals must be translated into concrete terms if specific activities are to be directed to the realization of the goals, it becomes necessary to arrive at some agreement about the translation. Since church members come from a variety of backgrounds, they bring a variety of understandings about how the goals should be translated.

Each person is a part of some history and tradition. It may be a short history such as being a member of a newly formed club for one year, or as a member of the Christian Church one may

²Thomas C. Campbell, "Arenas of Negotiation," in John Biersdorf (ed.) Creating An Intentional Ministry (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1976), p.43.

³Burton R. Clark, "Organizational Adaptation and Precarious Values," American Sociological Review, XXI (1956), 327-336.

be influenced by hundreds of years of history. The traditions that grow out of these histories have a powerful impact on the way a person perceives his or her world and the subsequent choices one makes on the basis of that perception.⁴

Because of this diversity and confusion of goals there are usually two kinds of conflict that result: First, there is a conflict of understanding between the minister and most of the members. Second, there is a conflict of intention between various groups of the membership. The membership is more apt to state objectives based more on need and the practicalities of "running" a church. Ministers, on the other hand, generally state their conceptions of the congregation's formal goals in terms of theological statements covering ultimate concerns. Contributing to this is the minister's theological training and his leadership role in the congregation.

The answer to the question "What is our business?" is the first responsibility of top management. Indeed, one sure way to tell whether a particular job is top management or not is to ask whether its holder is expected to be concerned with, and responsible for, answering this question. Only top management can make sure that this question receives the attention it deserves and that the answer makes sense enables the business to plot its course and set its objectives.⁵

However, if we do in deed believe in the priesthood of believers and that we are all interdependent members of the Body of Christ it becomes a responsibility of the entire membership to be

⁴G. Douglass Lewis, "The Dimension of Intentionality," Class Syllabus, Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1976 p.9.

⁵Drucker, p. 78.

involved in answering the question. It is noteworthy how much the efforts of the Old Testament prophets were directed toward calling Israel back to God's purpose. Certainly, much of Paul's letter to the church at Corinth was an effort to get members to agree on goals.

Dean M. Kelley has a chapter on "Traits of a 'Strong' Religion," in what he suggests that we "imagine an ideal type of what religion might be in its most concentrated form, a model of a religious group that would have maximum cohesion, vitality, and functional effectiveness." He suggests that in creating such a model we employ three criteria in evaluating this ideal type. The three criteria (or sets of questions) deal with goals, controls, and communications. Under goals he lists some questions that are very relevant here:

1. What are the organization's aims, purposes, objectives, central convictions, creed, ideology, "explanation" of life (these are meant to be similar and overlapping features)?
2. How are these goals determined?
3. What place do they hold in the lives of members? That is, what demand do they make upon members? and what commitment is given in response?⁶

Goal Ownership.

The first rule (in making a decision) is to make sure that everyone who will have to do something to make the decision effective- or who could sabotage it - has been forced to participate responsibly in the discussion. This is not "democracy." It is salesmanship.⁷

⁶Dean M. Kelley, Why Conservative Churches are Growing (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 56,57.

⁷Drucker, p.477.

The primary motivation of an individual is invariably directed toward working on one's personal goals. The organizations which are alive and healthy are those in which a large number of the organization's goals and the member's goals for the organization are synonymous or very close together. There are always several goals operating in any church organization. There are personal goals which each individual brings. There are the goals that each individual has for the organization. There are also the goals that the organization has. Persons are really not very motivated to work on goals that belong to someone else and are imposed upon them as an "ought" or an obligation. Often we discover this the hard way. When churches impose goals upon their members, they frequently discover that the people have only minimal energy, at best, and virtually no motivation to pursue these goals. This lack of motivation can express itself in a variety of ways. People promise to do something but they do not get around to it. They raise what seem to be irrelevant objections. They do not give money. Their attendance becomes spasmodic. Eventually they stop attending altogether.

A mistake that is common in church administration is that communication is usually from the top down and rarely from the bottom up. The same pattern is reflected in much of our goal setting. For this reason the member does not "buy" the organization's goals. This pattern is, I believe, also contrary to the Christian faith for Jesus time and time again reiterated the importance of the individual. The purpose of public goal setting is so that every member can have

a say in expressing intentions and goals. In this way individuals will have a definite influence in the direction of the church to which they are affiliated. If this does not happen and the member fails to own the goals, commitment will be low as well as involvement and interest. The concept of goal ownership needs to be recognized early. (It's my goals which are the good goals- always!) The process, the priorities and the program should be continually preached, taught, discussed and debated. Leading people into making the organization's goals their personal goals is an important effort to be undertaken again and again.

Goal sharing is important for three reasons. First, it gives people the feeling of doing things they want to do. Second, it helps them to believe that they are working on something of value. Third it makes them feel as though they are part of the organization rather than working for it. As individuals participate in the goal setting and planning of an organization they will feel a sense of ownership for the goals and the plans and feel a higher sense of motivation.

Some Practical Suggestions. The predicament of the average pastor was well voiced by one minister when he said to his congregation:

You have called me to lead you to be and to do what you know in your hearts you ought to be and to do, but don't want to. You will be unhappy with me if I don't make a good try. You might be unhappy with me if I succeed with you. Try I must. Please pray for me and for yourselves.⁸

⁸Lyle E. Schaller and Charles A. Tidwell, Creative Church Administration (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), p.66.

In dealing with the conflict between "What our business is," and "What our business should be," or why individuals join a church and why they should join a church we can probably only close the gap. Harvey Siefert has written that "one reason the Church looks so bad is that its goals are higher than those of any other organization."⁹ To that I would add that the church sometimes looks bad because its goals appear to be so fuzzy and unclaimed by the individuals that compose its membership.

The techniques employed in carrying out the goal setting process within the congregation are not as important as the basic principle itself. For "the healthy church organization is the one which constantly works at developing at every level of its life public processes whereby persons can make known their intentions and goals and can work on their fulfillment within that organization."¹⁰ I believe that every individual church has a personality of its own. The techniques used would depend upon the needs and the make-up of the local church.

Some denominations have a yearly congregational self-evaluation which incorporates a goal setting process. Recently the Synod of Southern California of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. published some study suggestions for an evaluation entitled

⁹Harvey Siefert, New Power For The Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), p.142.

¹⁰G. Douglas Lewis, "Church Organizational Development," in Biersdorf, p.149.

"Congregation in Mission." The purpose of this study was "to be certain:

1. That the church is relevant to the community and world of which it is a part,
2. That its programs are responsive to the multiplicity of human needs at its various stages of development, and
3. That persons accountable for these programs have a clear understanding of what they are expected to do within the goals and objectives of the organization.¹¹

The United Methodist Church has a study which looks at a district church by church. It involved five sessions each consisting of from one to one and a half hours. The sessions cover the following topics:

1. Analysis of the purpose of the church.
2. Definition of the church in light of the New Testament.
3. Mission of the universal church. Its relationship to the local church and to the denomination.
4. Analysis of the needs of the community, the church, and the world.
5. Development of a statement of purpose! ¹²

Among other resources which may be helpful are an outline by H. Newton Malony entitled "Major Issues to be Considered in a Church's Reassessment of its Purpose and Mission in a Community,"¹³ a workbook

¹¹"Process For Developing Goals and Objectives," in Congregation in Mission (Synod of Southern California, United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., September 19, 1975), p.1.

¹²L. L. White, Pasadena District Superintendent, United Methodist Church, 695 W. Sierra Madre, Sierra Madre, CA, 91024.

¹³H. Newton Malony, "Major Issues to be Considered in a Church's Reassessment of its Purpose and Mission in a Community." (Church Consultation Service, Graduate School of Psychology, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.)

entitled God's Purpose/Man's Plans by Edward R. Dayton,¹⁴ and a self-evaluation game by Lyle E. Schaller entitled "What is Our Purpose?"¹⁵

A practice that is increasing is that of a church to develop a church profile to be used during a pastoral change. Generally included in this profile is the congregation's conception of its goals and purpose. This practice contributes toward a better matching of congregation and pastor as well as a clarification of goals.

Recently my church has been involved in a goal and task self-assessment. The need for the process was voiced in a combined meeting of Deacons and Deaconesses. They recommended that our Church Council take the appropriate steps. The Church Council the following week concurred with their recommendation and appointed a task force committee to proceed. The task force committee was then formed and consisted of the moderator, the chairman of the Board of Deacons, a layman who was also a management consultant by profession,¹⁶ and the pastor. On Lay-Sunday the management consultant preached a sermon on the subject challenging the congregation to the need for a self-assessment. He recommended to the task force that the formal

¹⁴Edward Dayton, God's Purpose/Man's Plans (Monrovia CA: Missions Advanced Research & Communication Center, 1974)

¹⁵Lyle E. Schaller, "What is Our Purpose?" Christian Ministry, (January 1973), 33.

¹⁶George Morrissey, MOR Associates, Buena Park, CA.

assessment could begin prior to Christian Enlistment Sunday. He realized that this was not the primary reason for the effort but felt that inward commitment could be a beneficial side effect. He believed that the principal objective should be to get a significant number of church members involved in assessing the role of the church and determining the directions this church should be heading and to lead them to a stronger commitment toward getting there.

The following material was our master plan which was employed by us and well received by the congregation. It was in three phases.

PHASE 1 - What is the job of this church? (sequence of events:)

1. Mail to all church members and friends a copy of the following checklist with a cover letter that they study, give careful thought to, but not complete.

WHAT IS THE JOB OF THIS CHURCH?

What values or reasons for existence are most important to YOU personally as you consider the place this church plays, or should play, in YOUR life. Check up to, but not more than, FIVE of the following (including one or more of your own if not identified in this list). Check what you honestly believe, not what you think you "ought to" check. These will be collected anonymously and tabulated.

- _____ 1. A place for organized worship of God.
- _____ 2. An opportunity for personal, mental and spiritual stimulation.
- _____ 3. A place to be confronted with and absolved from our sins.
- _____ 4. A place for religious education--particularly for our children.
- _____ 5. A social center for developing wholesome friendships.

- _____ 6. A place for baptisms, weddings and funerals.
- _____ 7. A source of professional counseling on personal problems.
- _____ 8. A source of spiritual comfort for those who are ill, bereaved, shut-in, or troubled in other ways.
- _____ 9. An opportunity for rendering Christian service to others.
- _____ 10. A source for the establishment of moral and ethical values.
- _____ 11. A forum for discussing and dealing with critical social issues.
- _____ 12. A base for the extension of an ever-expanding Christian World Mission.
- _____ 13. Something worthwhile where I can contribute my money or other possessions.
- _____ 14. A place for serving the youth of our community.
- _____ 15. A source of evangelism for winning others to Christ.
- _____ 16. A community service organization.
- _____ 17. A place where I can spend one hour a week in peace without feeling guilty about not doing more.
- _____ 18. An outlet for personal expression (teaching, choir, other volunteer effort).
- _____ 19. Other (specify) _____

- _____ 20. Other (specify) _____

2. Sunday morning service (the following week) copies of the checklist distributed (with pencils) as people enter with instructions not to complete until asked to. Brief instructions will be given (5 minutes maximum) early in the service and the people will be asked to complete, fold (for anonymity), and pass in. Results will be

tabulated during the balance of the service (4-6 people needed for tabulation).

3. At conclusion of the service the congregation should be encouraged to move promptly to Social Hall, get cup of coffee and take a seat quickly. Results of tabulation will be shared (see page 8 of this study). In small groups (maximum 8 people each) they will be asked to discuss:

- a. What does this tell us?
- b. What should we do about it?
- c. Do we want to change or expand anything we are doing?
If so, what and how?

Each group will be asked to select one spokesperson to report briefly on the group's conclusions after about 15 minutes of discussion with notes from each group turned in. Time required from start of post-worship meeting - 45 minutes to 1 hour.

4. The next Sunday's adult class to be devoted to discussion of summarized results leading to agreement on one or more objectives and action plans. If sufficient interest and involvement is displayed, this can be extended for additional class sessions or set up as a special task force for those wishing to work on it.

PHASE 2 - What is my job as an individual within this church?

Specific events to be determined during or following Phase 1. It could be done in a church service, in the adult class, or as a special meeting. Each individual to be asked to deal personally with the following questions:

- 1. What do I need and want from my religion?
- 2. What do I need and want from my church?
- 3. What must I do to achieve those needs and wants?
- 4. What help do I need from others and how will I get it?

PHASE 3 - What is the job of those who occupy key positions within this church?

This phase can take place concurrent with or following Phase 2. Two or more people who either have held or are familiar with each of the key positions in the church will meet as subgroups within a total group meeting called for this purpose. It could be a part of the adult class. More practically, this probably should be an invitational luncheon meeting following a church service. They will be asked to come up with answers to the following questions as related to the specific position they are studying with opportunity for feedback and modification from the other total group members. Total meeting time estimated at 2-3 hours.

1. What is the scope of responsibility for this position?
2. What is the relationship with the minister and other key individuals?
3. What other commitments (e.g. Church Council meetings, written reports, etc.) are associated with this position?
4. What knowledge and skills are necessary or desirable for effective fulfillment of this position?
5. How much real time is required and how is it apportioned?

The minister and the moderator, as the two designated leaders, should complete their versions of this activity prior to this meeting to serve as a model for others.

At this point in time we have completed the first two phases and have discovered the process to be extremely beneficial.

Motivation

There has probably been more self-conscious study, experimentation, and written material on organization and administration in the

last 50 years than in all previous history. "The literature on managing worker and working (motivation), in quantity at least, exceeds the literature in any other management field, including even the management sciences and the computer."¹⁷ In other words, there is certainly no scarcity of books and papers on the subject of motivation which, while being very helpful, contributes to a clouding of the issues.

In attempting to reduce the tension of the conflict of the "is" and the "ought" of church membership it is not enough for people to know what they ought to be doing. They must be motivated to change. A very basic principle about motivation which is applicable to the membership of the Church is that if the Church is meeting needs, it will survive. If it is not meeting needs, it can expect to fail. Leavitt proposes three major ideas which, I believe, are basic in pursuing this principle:

These three ideas can provide the beginning of a system of conceptualizing human behavior:

1. The first is the idea of causality, the idea that human behavior is caused, just as the behavior of physical objects is caused by forces that act on those physical objects.
2. Second, there is the idea of directedness, the idea that human behavior is not only caused but is also pointed toward something, that behavior is goal-directed, that people want things.
3. Third...the concept of motivation, that underlying behavior one finds a "push" or a "motive" or a "want" or a "need" or a "drive."¹⁸

¹⁷ Drucker, p.23.

¹⁸ Harold J. Leavitt, Managerial Psychology (Chicago:University of Chicago Press, 1972), p.7.

The Church must be responsive to the needs of people. It must recognize that different people have different needs and that the Christian faith has the resources to enable them to have these needs met. It has been demonstrated time and again that the congregation that is sensitive to the needs of the people is able to establish a meaningful relationship with people outside the Church.

James D. Anderson develops the concept that whenever a person joins an organization he develops a kind of psychological contract with that organization. The individual expects certain things from the organization, and as long as the organization delivers the "goods" then he will be willing to make his personal contribution, i.e., fulfill his side of the contractual agreement. This psychological contract may be totally sub-conscious but nevertheless there exists between the organization and the individual a set of expectations, each of the other, which in fact determine membership. If either party reneges on the contract then the harmonious relationship is impaired, and if this happens too often then the relationship may be severed."¹⁹

Another factor to keep in mind is that this initial psychological contract may affirm the fact that the individual sees himself as a member of the group but this does not mean that he has

¹⁹James D. Anderson, To Come Alive (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), P. 51.

decided to become very involved. "In approaching any new organization, an individual makes two classes of decision - a decision to join and a decision to participate."²⁰

In wondering why people go to church we probably can assume that those who continue to attend church are in fact meeting some needs by doing so. It is vital for the pastor to have a useful theory of motivation to aid in comprehension of why people do what they do.

In looking at the contributions of numerous behavioral scientists, I can identify two who I believe are basic to my approach of a theory of motivation in the church. They are Douglas McGregor and A. H. Maslow. They both took a high view of the nature of work, a position consistent with biblical rubrics as early as the twentieth chapter of Exodus and perhaps as early as God's activity in creation recorded in the first two chapters of Genesis. They also recognized the difficulties in achieving genuinely humane management in the complex democracy in which we function today.

McGregor, one of the early writers to develop the question of the human factor, in motivation and labor, proposed his famous theory "X" and "Y". Theory "X" is based on the assumptions that:

²⁰Irwin Rubin, and others, "The Process of Joining Up Individuals and Organizations" (Albany, NY: Division of Higher Education, 1969), p.2.

1. The average human being dislikes work and will avoid it as far as possible;
2. He is lazy, lacks ambition, is irresponsible;
3. He must be strictly controlled in his work if the objectives of the organization are to be attained;
4. He is gullible and not really to be trusted.

In contrast theory "Y" assumes that:

1. The enjoyment of work is as natural as the enjoyment of games or rest;
2. People will exercise a strong sense of responsibility towards objectives they believe in;
3. If people are given the opportunity they learn not only to accept but also to desire responsibility;
4. The capacity to exercise a high degree of imagination, ingenuity and creativity is widely and not narrowly distributed among people;
5. Modern industrial life is such that the potentialities of the average man are only partially utilized;
6. in so far as people are passive or resistant to organizational needs, it is because present organizational structures have made them so. People will never learn to become responsible if they are continually treated if they were irresponsible.²¹

The theory "X" definition of man is worked out in its most extreme form in what has come to be called the classical or mechanistic structure of the organization. This is highly authoritarian; workers make no decisions for themselves but simply do what they are told. If they obey they are rewarded; if they refuse to obey they are punished.

The theory "Y" definition of man is expressed in the organic structure, which leaves it open to men to be creative, responsible, committed, informed about the objectives of their own and the

²¹ Douglas McGregor, The Human Side of Enterprise (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), chs. 3 and 4.

organization's work. This theory assumes a view of man much nearer the level of acceptance for the Christian administrator. Interest in and concern for the individual along with a higher evaluation of the worth of the individual would seem to be much more compatible with the ethic of the Christian faith.

Drucker has little patience for many of the theories of behavioral scientists.

The debate over the scientific validity of Theory X versus Theory Y is largely a sham battle. The question the manager needs to ask is not, "Which theory of human nature is right?" The question is "What is the reality of my situation and how can I discharge my task of managing worker and working in today's situation?".....Most, if not all, of the recent writers on industrial psychology profess allegiance to Theory Y, but they talk and write about control psychological manipulation.... Psychological manipulation replaces the carrot of financial rewards; and empathy, i.e., the exploitation of individual fears, anxieties, and personality needs, replaces the old fear of being punished, or losing one's job.²²

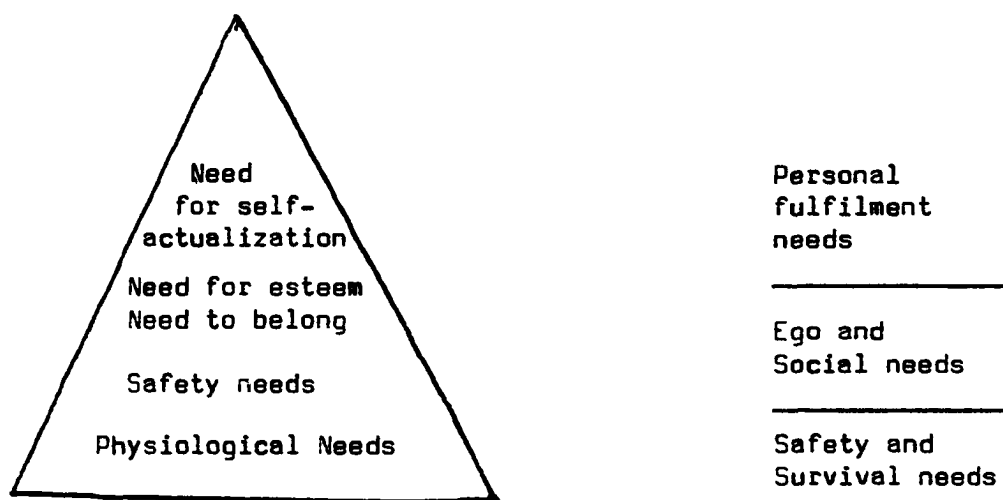
McGregor observed that most administrators verbalize Theory Y but actually operate by Theory X. I think the same holds true in the church where many ministers think Y is more consistent with the Christian ethic but they actually operate on the level of theory X. I also think that Drucker is right when he suggests psychological manipulation replaces the carrot of financial rewards. In the church, however, the carrot of financial rewards never really existed and psychological (or religious) manipulation has too frequently

²²Drucker, p.235, 243.

dominated. The church controls primarily by approval or rejection. Approval can be given by recognition, honor and prestige or it can be given by love, acceptance, and inclusion. The building up of a norm to which people are called to adhere or to face rejection is a way the church keeps the people active and on the job.

Abraham Maslow has presented the hypothesis that our fundamental motivational tendencies or needs form a hierarchical system.²³ At the basis of the system are our physiological needs for food, drink, warmth, etc. This is all that the new-born baby requires. Very quickly, however, he discovers in his mother's arms that not only are these basic needs being met but also his need for safety and security. His mother gives him not only food but comfort; he learns to cry not only when he is hungry but when he simply wants to be cradled in his mother's arms. As time goes by, the developing child finds that in his relationships with the other members of the family another need is being met, the social need to belong. Later on, it is not enough for him that he should just belong to a group; he needs to be singled out as an individual, to be noticed and praised, and so he finds a response to his need for esteem, an ego need. Finally he becomes aware of his need for fulfillment as a person, for personal growth and development. This hierarchy is illustrated in the following diagram:

²³ A. H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954).



According to Maslow, man is motivated by each need in turn. When he is hungry all he will think of is food. If he is deprived of oxygen, all his efforts are directed towards securing air to breathe. But once these basic needs are met he works to ensure his safety - and then his acceptance into a group or groups - and then his position in these groups - and finally the development of all his potentialities as a person. Maslow has also noted that as a need is satisfied its strength is reduced and the next need in the hierarchy is then dominant. He also affirms that most of the people in our society have satisfied the safety and survival needs but have deep longings for esteem and self-actualization. He calls attention to the fact that there are different levels of needs, each of which is legitimate in its own right and must be satisfied if one is to move on to a higher order need. I think that Maslow's schemata is especially helpful in spelling out the needs of the church member and providing an outline of what the church can and should do to meet their needs.

Physiological Needs. The church has no "animalistic" urges to satisfy, but it hungers for survival and continuity. To stay alive

it must have the enthusiastic attention, sustained support and gift of the constructive energies of its leadership and membership. Hopefully, the individual member does not need the church to satisfy his needs for physical sustenance although emergencies have historically placed the church in this position. Yet attendance at church and religious school does offer a physiological and emotional change for him. Boredom is a condition which not only brings about an emotional loss of zest for life but also causes a general depression of physiological function. Thus energetic involvement in church work may help to offer some challenge in an otherwise apathetic existence and stop a steady deterioration in physical and intellectual life.

Preaching a gospel of salvation which had nothing to say about physiological needs would not be relevant to a child (or a people) in that need stage...What would heaven..look like to a person in the physiological need stage? It would likely be a "banquet table" or a place where one would have physiological comfort and completion, perhaps with plenty of sexual fulfillment.²⁴

Safety Needs. Man's spiritual need is related to his need for safety and security. The human fears physical and mental loneliness. He may more easily satisfy the physical need than the mental. The church offers the insecure individual varied opportunities to satisfy his mental and certain physical needs for a normal, orderly, just, coherent, and fear-free existence. It gives him a piece of territory in which he can sink roots. It can become his church, his house of

²⁴Keith Miller, The Becomers (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1973), p.92.

God, a tangible and embraceable chunk of his heritage and his vote for God's work. With the growth of human mobility in America, the role of the church as the anchor for the transient becomes a major one. To a person in the safety-need stage of the hierarchy heaven would possibly be:

..a place where he was eternally "safe" from harm or at least from evil, death, and hell. So in order to be relevant for people in this stage, the preacher would have to concentrate on the security aspect of the grace of God in Christ, the saving of men from death and hell...If the sermon doesn't describe the fear of hell and the safety of salvation, it simply "does not sound like the gospel."²⁵

Belongingness and Love Needs. Membership in the church should provide a focal point for all family members to live, study, work, worship, and grow together. The lonely couple or child, the family which has recently moved into the community, the man whose job does not expose him to peers he can admire and socialize with, the wife whose friends are limited to her husband's contacts in his job, the youngster whose friends are limited to school and neighborhood associates---all can achieve some measure of gratification of their social needs and may even be moved to become leaders. Parents may become involved in creative church functions when their children become active participants and leaders in the youth peer groups, and vice versa. A church with an active outreach program also provides opportunities for still broader social love-need satisfaction in community service activities.

²⁵Ibid., p.95

...heaven..to a person in the belonginess and love need stage.. would probably be a place or state of being in which one feels that God loves him and accepts him just as he is--where all people love each other and love is the purpose and end of life.²⁶

Esteem Needs. The church presents the members with opportunities to identify with creative, vigorous people, to join in their sense of accomplishment and find inspiration through mutual respect. He may achieve recognition as a specialist who is consulted when vital decisions and plans are made. He may thus rise in status in the social influence process and become involved with critical individual and organizational factors. The member who achieves a position of leadership finds satisfaction in being needed by others, doing an important job, and having an impact on people. He is rewarded by becoming a center of communication, by being emulated and by affecting the welfare of the church and community. He is given a platform from which he can be seen and recognized.

James Anderson tells of a congregation that had twelve refusals from various individuals when approached to serve on the board of deacons. Thinking that these refusals reflected a deep dissatisfaction with the local church they investigated the rationals for these overwhelming rejections. They discovered that "they were happy with the church, personally fond of the minister, had no

²⁶ Ibid., p.96.

intention of going elsewhere, gave money, and in most cases attended worship on a consistent basis. The task of serving on the board of deacons did not motivate them."²⁷ In other words it did not meet their esteem needs.

To a person involved in meeting the esteem needs heaven could possibly represent a place where:

one would feel a great sense of worth, of being highly valued by God and other people - not because of vastly superior performance or possessions but simply for himself. A Christian witness who only talked about "hellfire" would miss such a person almost totally. Whereas a speaker who emphasized the point that "because God loves you, you are somebody" might hit the listener right in the heart.²⁸

Self-Actualization. Upon meeting the previous basic needs the person may enter the stage of the self-actualization needs. These include the desire for creativity and self-expression, the need for realizing one's highest potential, for mature relationships with others. What appears to happen at this point is that an individual has enough of his basic needs met to risk letting down his mask of unreality, which seemed necessary for security and affirmation before. The church offers unlimited challenges to the member to try his ingenuity, exercise his creativity and stimulate himself to progress. Heaven to the person at this stage could be:

²⁷ Anderson, p.53.

²⁸ Miller, p.99.

a state in which he is free to be himself and to participate in creative activities to which he could give his all with abandon.It might well be a state in which a man or woman knew God directly and personally and would simply enjoy him forever.²⁹

This is the highest level of personal development according to Maslow's original schemata. It is at this level that we most closely approximate that for which we were created. It is interesting that Maslow noted that the people he studied who were at this stage had a God-like quality about them. In theological terminology this would be the state of sanctification. To my way of thinking sanctification is not necessarily a state of perfection, or a state of separation, but rather a state of religious maturation. A state where, by the grace of God, we become more and more Christlike. I believe that the job of the Christian church is to lead people through these stages and enable them to move up the ladder of basic needs. The conflict between why we join the church and why we should join the church is not too dissimilar to individuals wanting to be served rather than wanting to serve. I have been treating it as a sociological and administrative problem. An excellent case could be made for it being a religious problem. Theologically, I can think of only one answer to the problem involved in moving from self-centeredness to unselfishness and that is the grace of God.

Evaluation.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 101, 103.

Different classes of service institutions need different structures. But all of them...need to impose on themselves such discipline..

1. They need to define "What is our business and what should it be?"
2. They need to derive clear objectives and goals from their definition of function and mission.
3. They then have to think through priorities of concentration.
4. They need to define measurements of performance.
5. They need to use these measurements to feed back on their efforts, that is, to build self-control from results into their system.
6. Finally, they need an organized audit of objectives and results, so as to identify those objectives that no longer serve a purpose or have proven unattainable.³⁰

Chester Barnard stated that an organization exists when three factors are present: (1) communication between persons; (2) a willingness to serve on the part of these persons; (3) and a common purpose or goal which unifies or coordinates their efforts.³¹ The simplest organization in Barnard's terms would be two persons in communication working toward a common goal. Most churches were originally formed in response to some felt need and common goal. Originally, the need may have been either a need for building up a body of local believers, or it may have been the response to some outside challenge in mission, or it may have been a combination of both. In the early stages of its life it began to "organize". Sunday Schools were formed. Boards of deacons and trustees, along with other boards and committees, all found their place. As time progressed many of these suborganizations institutionalized: they

³⁰Drucker, p.158.

³¹Chester I. Barnard, The Functions of The Executive (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938), p.82.

began to perpetuate themselves and their functions as inherently of value, without reference to the initiating need. It is almost as though the respiratory system in a human being settled down to pumping air into the body as valuable in itself without considering the needs of the circulatory system and the nervous system, or even taking note of the fact that a human being ultimately provided its reason to be.

Churches continue to survive because they meet certain perceived needs of their members but too often they exhibit less and less life. Slowly there develops a malaise within the congregation and the question arises, "Are we doing what we should be doing?"

The permanence of an organization depends upon the willingness of the membership to continue their service. This in turn depends upon their faith in the organization's goal or major purpose. But whenever sacrifices exceed satisfaction, willingness tends to disappear. Thus, a well-known foundation, set up for the unique purpose of combating polio, found that people greatly reduced their contributions to the foundation when the Salk vaccine was discovered. In the public's eye, the unique objective of the foundation - that of fighting and defeating polio - had been achieved, though there were literally thousands of polio victims who could never profit from this great discovery since they had contracted the disease before the new vaccine was made available and continued funds were needed for their care. Financial support, however, diminished sharply, and the foundation was forced to cut back on many of its services and close down several

of its facilities. In the eyes of the public, the unique and primary objective of the foundation had been achieved. Apparently the objective of continued therapy for those who had developed polio prior to the discovery of the vaccine did not sufficiently stimulate donors, who felt that the sacrifices exceeded the satisfactions derived from the act of giving to a needy and worthwhile cause.

Likewise, if the primary goal of the Church does not appear to be a unique and sufficiently worthy one, then its members may also feel that the sacrifices exceed the satisfactions. Churches, for instance, which claim only social or educational objectives as their unique work may discover that welfare agencies and educational institutions are providing a superior type of service in these areas, a service beyond that which the churches themselves can offer. When this is the case, church members tend to question the primary function of the Church and the demands it places upon their time and money. The sacrifices which people must make to conduct a comprehensive church program can indeed be great, even to the extent of involving all of their time, money, and energy which are over and above that required to provide the necessities of life. In order for the congregation to "buy" the goals of the Church they must be involved in a constant re-evaluation and clarification process.

The psychological contract between an individual and the organization cannot be drawn up once and then placed in a safety-deposit box for safe keeping. The contract is dynamic, and opportunities must be present for continual communication and renegotiation...³²

³²Anderson, p.62.

In the classical steps of management procedure (planning, organizing, staffing, directing, controlling) goal setting would fall under the heading of planning, motivating under directing, and evaluation would be under the heading of control, which is the last step. Near the conclusion of Koontz and O'Donnell's classical book on management reference is made to a process suggested by J. O. McKinsey. He said that a business enterprise should periodically make a management audit, an appraisal of the enterprise in all of its aspects, in the light of its present and probable future environment. The first step of the audit would be to study the outlook. The second step would be to appraise the position of the organization in relation to others, both currently and in prospect. The next logical step would be to re-examine the basic objectives and major policies to see where the organization wishes to be in five or ten years.³³

Among the control devices in the local congregation the budget is one of the most potent. Actually budgeting is the formulation of plans for a given future in financial terms. A lot can be assumed about a church's priorities by examining its budget. Some other devices a church can employ in the process of evaluation include planning retreats, task force committees, and self-evaluation studies. Public rehearsal of creeds and statements of faith can also serve as "control" devices in that they call back the church to the ideals and purposes

³³ Harold Koontz and Cyril O'Donnell, Principles of Management (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), p.652-654.

it is supposed to value as statement of intentions. Through the centuries these have constantly been revised, not because the Christian faith has changed, but rather because our values and understanding have changed. Whenever two or more denominations merge, one of the first steps will be to adopt a formal statement that all participants can "buy".

Whenever an organization re-evaluates its purposes and goals there are two steps for which it must be prepared. First it must be prepared to abandon that which is no longer worthwhile, and second, it must be prepared to set priorities. Making abandonment acceptable is one of Drucker's greatest contributions to church organization.³⁴ It is especially difficult to enact in the church because so many customs are reinforced by religious sentimentality. A fresh look at goals should suggest that some properties and programs could well be abandoned. In addition to abandoning that which is no longer viable, or worthwhile, organizations must establish priorities. Drucker is inflexible in his convictions that the organization must narrow its goals. He points out that an organization can only do a small number of tasks at any one time. The law of organization, according to Drucker, is concentration. This may be difficult for most clergy who conceive of the church as being all things to all people.

³⁴Drucker, p.93,94.

As I conclude this section of the paper and move on to the summation, one item needs to be touched upon. Amitai Etzioni suggested a few years ago that many organizational studies are inconsequential because they used a "goal model" in the study of institutional effectiveness. In effect, this kind of analyses takes the formally stated goals as the only criterion for measuring efficiency.³⁵ Etzioni maintains that there will invariably be a discrepancy between the ideal of the organization and the concreted entity because the means required to attain the formal goals are always greater than those available. I agree with Etzioni in his criticism of the "goal" model if the goals are never translated into objectives which are measurable and reachable by the congregation. But a "goal model" is essential to provide nature and the purpose of the organization so that policy can be formulated to guide the objectives, or action plan, of the congregation.

³⁵ Amitai Etzioni, "Two Approaches to Organizational Analysis: A Critique and a Suggestion," Administrative Science Quarterly, V (September 1961), 257-278.

Chapter 6

SUMMATION

Why do people join a church in the first place? I believe that everybody has her or his own reason, and possibly they do not consciously know what it is themselves. I believe that everybody develops a kind of psychological contract with the Church. It will probably never be put into writing and may remain in a state of flux. "Nevertheless, there exists between the individual and the organization a set of expectations, each of the other, which in fact determine membership. If either party reneges on the contract then the harmonious relationship is impaired, and if this happens too often then the relationship may be severed."¹

Usually one participates in a church to meet the so-called higher order needs (social interaction, self-esteem, self-actualization) ...Half of the battle for motivation in the church is related to satisfaction of individual higher-level needs, but the other half is related to participation in and satisfaction with the problem-solving process. If some don't like the decisions that have been made they can very easily show their dissatisfaction by removing themselves from the group. Thus, heavy emphasis and much time must be invested in this process in order to keep members participating...(and)...help others discover their own needs and find resources to meet them, develop and choose between alternative strategies to accomplish their goals and implement them.²

I feel confident that if I asked the couple described at the beginning of this paper why they had come to church, they would

¹James Anderson, To Come Alive (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), p.51.

²Speed Leas, "The Uniqueness of the Church As a Management System," Christian Ministry, IV:1 (January 1973), 11.

initially respond with a "higher" statement of motivation. After honest reflection I believe that they would arrive at the same conclusion that I now have. A non-church person might well ask, "What is wrong with their motivation?" I would respond that, by itself, it is not wrong. It is inadequate, though, when compared with what "ought" to be the motivation for going to church.

I always ask the students in confirmation classes why they want to be confirmed. Rarely do I receive the answers that I was hoping to hear. One of the more frequent responses is simply that it is the thing that they were expected to do. Some of this confusion may come as a result of the fact that it is the same reason why many parents send their children to confirmation class in the first place.

It may also be the reason why their parents joined the church. When people are asked why they joined the church, the reasons given are so often of a non-theological sort. Are these unworthy reasons? I would say, "No!" But, I believe that they are less worthy or lower level reasons.

One of my favorite stories is that of a young man who was courting a girl friend who loved pizza. At the time, the young man could barely stomach pizza. In order to win the affection of this young lady, he learned to tolerate pizza on a regular basis. The day came when the romance lost its attraction and that relationship was dissolved. However, he discovered, to his amazement, that he had developed a craving for pizza. The same thing happens, frequently,

in the church when we do the right things for the wrong reasons, or when a subsidiary organization within the church is elevated into the primary position. I have often made the statement that there are certain groups within the church that, the week after the dissolution of their church would continue to function without missing a beat. Whenever any organization gets started there are various groups that are organized for the purpose of increased efficiency in meeting the major goal. Unfortunately, they frequently become ends rather than means.

Individuals have goals, conscious or subconscious. They may drift into them or they may declare them. They bring to the organization, the Church, needs felt and those not felt but real nevertheless. The Church will survive if it meets needs. If it does not meet needs then it is bound to fail.

In resolving or managing the conflict between the "is" and the "ought" of church membership, we need to employ the techniques of public goal-setting, personal and public re-evaluation, and motivation of the congregations to enable them to meet the higher needs. As H. Boone Porter has intimated, pastors should avoid moralism and accept all motivations, begin with them, and work to transform the less worthy of them into those of higher value.³

³H. Boone Porter, Growth and Life in The Local Church (New York: Seabury Press, 1968)

The purpose of the church needs clarifying and restating by each new generation of Christians.

In all of life we struggle with that which is good, with that which is better, and with that which is best. The couple that is no longer involved with my church came to the church with reasons, or motivations, that were good. I feel that the church failed them, not so much in no longer meeting the need for the religious-socialization of their son but rather in not leading them to a re-evaluation process to enable them to set higher goals. Most people join organizations for selfish reasons that may be good in themselves. The church must learn to lead them through a process of religious maturation so that in Lyle Schaller's terms they will "become what, by God's grace, they can become, and to do what, by God's grace, they can do."⁴

⁴Lyle E. Schaller and Charles A. Tidwell, Creative Church Administration (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), p.66.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Althaus, Paul. The Theology of Martin Luther. Tr. by R. Schultz.
Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963.
- Anderson, James D. To Come Alive.
New York: Harper & Row, 1973.
- Barnard, Chester I. The Functions of the Executive.
Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938.
- Beach, Waldo. Christian Community.
Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969.
- Biersdorf, John (ed.) Creating An Intentional Ministry.
Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1976.
- The Book of Concord. Tr. and ed. by Theodore G. Tappert.
Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959.
- The Book of Worship for Church and Home.
Nashville: Methodist Publishing House, 1965.
- Brunner, Emil. The Christian Doctrine of the Church, Faith and the Consummation. Tr. by David Cairns. Philadelphia:
Westminster Press, 1950.
- Calvin, John. Compend of the Institutes. Ed. by Hugh Kerr.
Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1939.
- Clark, Burton R. "Organizational Adaptation and Precarious Values."
American Sociological Review, XXI (1956), 327-36.
- Congregation in Mission. Synod of Southern California, United
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1975.
- Coser, Lewis. The Functions of Social Conflict.
New York: Free Press, 1956.
- Dayton, Edward. God's Purpose/Man's Plans. Monrovia, CA:
Missions Advanced Research & Communication Center, 1974.
- DeWolf, L. Harold. A Theology of the Living Church.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953.
- "The Directory of Worship." Philadelphia: General Assembly of
the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1958.
- Dittes, James E. The Church in the Way.
New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967.

- Drucker, Peter. Management.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953.
- _____. "The Art of Doing the Important."
Christian Ministry, III:5 (September 1972), 6.
- Dulles, Avery. Models of the Church.
New York: Doubleday, 1974.
- Etzioni, Amitai. "Two Approaches to Organizational Analysis: A Critique and a Suggestion." Administrative Science Quarterly, V (September 1961), 257-78.
- Fairchild, Roy, W., and J.C. Wynn. Families in the Church: A Protestant Survey. New York: Association Press, 1961.
- First Congregational Church. Constitution and By-Laws.
Buena Park, CA., 1935.
- Glasse, James D. Putting it Together in the Parish.
Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972.
- Grimes, Howard. The Church Redemptive.
Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958.
- Hahn, Wilhelm. Worship and Congregation.
Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963.
- Harkins, George F. The Church and Her Work.
Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1960.
- Hordern, William E. Living By Grace.
Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975.
- Jenkins, Daniel T. The Strangeness of the Church.
New York: Doubleday, 1955.
- Kelley, Dean M. Why Conservative Churches are Growing.
New York: Harper & Row, 1972.
- Koontz, Harold, and Cyril O'Donnell. Principles of Management.
New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972.
- Kung, Hans. The Church.
New York: Doubleday, 1967.
- _____. On Being a Christian. Tr. by Edward Quinn.
New York: Doubleday, 1976.
- Leas, Speed. "The Uniqueness of the Church As a Management System."
Christian Ministry, IV:1 (January 1973), 10-11.

- Leavitt, Harold J. Managerial Psychology.
Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1972.
- Lee, Robert, and Martin Marty (eds.) Religion and Social Conflict.
New York: Oxford University Press, 1964.
- Lester, Donald G. "What Makes the outsider Turn to the Church?"
Presbyterian Life, XV (June 15, 1962), 15-17.
- Lewin, Kurt. A Dynamic Theory of Personality.
New York: McGraw-Hill, 1945.
- Lewis, G. Douglas. "The Dimensions of Intentionality." Class Syllabus.
Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1976.
- _____. Lecture given at First Presbyterian Church, Pasadena, CA,
July 1976.
- Littell, Franklin. The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism.
New York: Macmillan, 1964.
- Luther, Martin. "Against Hans Wurst, 1541," in his Works.
Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966. XLI, 195-218.
- _____. "Blessed Sacrament of the True and Holy and True Body of
Christ, and the Brotherhoods," in his Works.
Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966. XXXV, 50-51.
- _____. "On the Councils and the Churches, 1539," in his Works.
Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966. XLI, 164-67.
- Macquarrie, John. Principles of Christian Theology.
New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966.
- Malony, H. Newton. "Major Issues to be Considered in a Church's
Reassessment of its Purpose and Mission in a Community."
Church Consultation Service, Graduate School of Theology,
Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA: (Mimeographed.)
- Martin, Ralph. Worship in the Early Church.
Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1964.
- Marty, Martin. The Fire We Can Light.
New York: Doubleday, 1973.
- _____. The New Shape of American Religion.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958.
- Maslow, A.H. Motivation and Personality.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954.

- McGregor, Douglas. The Human Side of Management.
New York: McGraw Hill, 1960.
- Membership Trends. General Assembly Mission Council,
United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1976.
- Miller, Keith. The Becomers.
Waco TX: Word Books, 1973.
- Neill, Stephen. The Christian Society.
London: Nisbet, 1952.
- _____. The Unfinished Task.
London: Lutterworth Press, 1957.
- Newman, Ross. The Los Angeles Times (January 18, 1977),
Sec. III p.5, col.1.
- Niebuhr, H. Richard. The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956.
- _____. and Daniel Williams (eds.) The Ministry in Historical Perspectives. New York: Harper & Row, 1956.
- Packard, Vance. The Hidden Persuaders.
New York: Pocket Books, 1957.
- Porter, H. Boone. Growth and Life in the Local Church.
New York: Seabury Press, 1968.
- Richardson, Alan. An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958.
- Rubin, Irwin and others. "The Process of Joining Up Individuals and Organizations," (Educational Opportunity Forum 2, No.1,) Albany, NY: Division of Higher Education, 1969.
- Schaller, Lyle E. Parish Planning. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971.
- _____. "What is Our Purpose?" Christian Ministry, IV:1 (January 1973), 33.
- _____. and Charles A. Tidwell. Creative Church Administration. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975.
- Sherrill, Lewis. The Gift of Power.
New York: Macmillan, 1958.
- Siefert, Harvey. New Power For the Church.
Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976.

- Smart, James. The Teaching Ministry of the Church.
Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976.
- "Statement of Faith," as approved by the Second General Synod
of the United Church of Christ, 1959.
- Vangerud, Richard D. "A Study of Certain Inactive Members in a Local
Congregation," Journal of Pastoral Care, XXII:1
(March 1968), 7-20.
- Whale, J.S. The Protestant Tradition.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955.
- Whyte, William H. The Organizational Man.
New York: Doubleday, 1957.
- Winter, Gibson. The Suburban Captivity of the Churches.
New York: Doubleday, 1961.
- Witham, Robert D. "Education: The Whole Church's Dilemma."
(United Church Board for Homeland Ministries), New
Conversation, I:3 (1976).